RECORDS

OF THE

RELIGIOUS EXPERIENCES,

AND

PIOUS OBSERVATIONS

OF

Mr. THOMAS WARD.

TO WHICH ARE ADDED

EXTRACTS

FROM SEVERAL OF HIS

LETTERS.

LONDON:

Printed by C. ETHERINGTON, and sold by W. CATER, No. 274, opposite *Red Lion Street*, HOLBORN.

M,DCC,LXXXI.

TELESCOPIC

ASTRONOMICAL

OBSERVATIONS

AND

REFLECTIONS

ON THE

RECORDS

PREFACE.

THE appearance of the following Sheets is a ſort of literary reſurrection from the grave of old MSS; they come forth, like *Lazarus*, with their grave clothes about them; and, like him, afford an inſtance of the power and goodneſs of the compaſſionate Mediator.

Very few particulars of the Author's Life can be collected: it appears, that in his youth he was engaged in one of the more liberal profeſſions; he ſuffered much through bad health, and did not extend his days to an advanced period.

He printed, for the uſe of his particular friends, an account of his Converſion, an abſtract of which is here given: and alſo a relation of the circumſtances attending the deaths of his Aunt and his Brother.

Various

PREFACE.

Various parts of the following Extracts, from ſeveral volumes of MSS. have been ſeen by many judicious miniſters, and others; who were all pleaſed to ſignify it as their opinion, that an acceptable ſervice would be performed in putting them into the hands of the good people of our congregations.

It would be ungrateful not to inform the readers of this poſthumous Publication, that the Editor obtained the Manuſcripts, a few years ſince, of Miſs DAUKES, a worthy lady, now reſiding in the *Old Jewry*; to whoſe family the Author was well known.

With ardent wiſhes that the flights of enthuſiaſm may never be ſubſtituted for the rational but elevated pleaſures of pure and undefiled Religion, the Editor ſubmits this little Book to the candor of his friends, and the bleſſing of God.

E. S.

Holborn,
April 12, 1781.

A BRIEF ACCOUNT OF THE CONVERSION, &c.

EVER ſince I can remember, the good Spirit of God hath been ſtriving with my ſoul; and very early, at ſeven or eight years of age, would ſtir me up to remember my Creator; for being born of godly parents, they took care to place me in ſuch families as feared the Lord, and called upon his name; but though my heart was tender, and inclined to that which was good, yet it was not a *new heart*, there was no ſupernatural change, and ſo was left expoſed to all the ſins incident to corrupt nature. And truly through the original depravation of my own vitious inclinations, and the abominable practices and examples of others, I ſet out early indeed in the ways of death, poſting furiouſly to deſtruction; though at firſt I found many ſecret murmurs, and a great deal of reluctance in my own breaſt; conſcience being as yet *ten-*

der, yet by often reſiſting the Spirit, and ſtifling convictions, it grew more flinty, and ſo quickly became hardened through the deceitfulneſs of ſin; and I ſaid, I deſired no other heaven, (ah! wretched ſoul!) if I might enjoy my ſins eternally upon earth.

About *Auguſt*, 1705, I was taken ſo very ill that I deſpaired of life; but Oh! what promiſes and reſolutions did I then make! Oh! how I *contemned* the world when I thought I muſt *leave* it! but all theſe ſtrong ſhews of repentance, proved merely ſick-bed reſolutions, which in a fortnight's time were quite forgotten, and I became worſe than ever. But from that ſeaſon, I perceived a viſible declining of the outward man, and was perpetually under the apprehenſions of death, judgment, and eternity, though that could not make me forſake ſin.

Never did any ſoul take a more deſperate and ready courſe to judicial hardneſs and final impenitency. I followed my own wicked inclinations, and was led captive by Satan at his will; and was as vain and refractory a wretch as ever the earth bore, a lump of vanity and filth, ignorance, and darkneſs, overgrown with corruption, and preſumptuous in ſin, till Chriſt came to make me willing in the day of his power.

On the 3d of March, 1705-6, being Sabbath day, and my turn to ſtay at home, I was terribly afflicted, as I had been ſome time before, with the thoughts of approaching death, being

being violently ſeized with ſuch a weakneſs that my body even ſhook again, and had all the ſymptoms of a ſudden diſſolution. I thought I muſt in earneſt haſte into another world, and thereupon was ſuddenly ſmitten with a ſenſe of divine juſtice, and ſtruck with trembling and horror of mind; I cried out with the convicted Jailer, *What ſhall I do to be ſaved?* I ſat down, took a Bible in my hand, and with much awe and ſolicitude of ſpirit began to read, and as I read, God made near approaches to my ſoul. Every word was realized to me, and accompanied with the ſpecial preſence of the inviſible God. By and bye I came to thoſe words of *Tamar, And I, whither ſhall I cauſe my ſhame to go?* upon which, I laid down my Bible, and with a flood of tears cried out, *And I, whither ſhall I cauſe my ſhame to go?* for I now beheld myſelf as a moſt loathſome object, and was exceedingly vile in mine own eyes; but preſently there came a ſweet calm upon my ſpirit, and I fell into deep thoughtfulneſs for the ſpace of an hour; but the conceptions of my mind, and what I then felt, can never be fully expreſt. Oh! what tenderneſs of heart! what meltings and relentings did I experience within this hour! what infinite longings after inward holineſs and purity! and this work of the Spirit was far different from all his former workings upon my ſoul: for I was wont only to take on for thoſe *notorious ſins* that moſt diſturbed my conſcience; but was quite ignorant of, and unconcerned about the *ſinfulneſs of my nature*; but

now it was otherwiſe with me: I ſaw innumerable ſwarms of ſecret corruptions, and ſpiritual ſins, like atoms in the beams of my enlightened underſtanding, which I never obſerved before; as though a lamp were hung up within me, I could turn my eyes inward and diſcern and reflect on the moſt retired workings of my heart; the darkneſs declined, and the true light began to dawn upon my ſoul; and now I cried out with David, *Againſt thee, thee only have I ſinned.* I wept bitterly to think I had all this while been ſinning againſt Chriſt. I mourned over him as one that mourns for his only ſon, and was in bitterneſs for him as one that is in bitterneſs for his firſt-born. I did not then cry out from a ſenſe of divine wrath, but to think I had ſo ſlighted and abuſed the forbearance of God, the ſtrivings of his Spirit, and merciful providences, all my life long: and this was accompanied with loathing of ſin. I now found my ſoul riſe up againſt my former luſts with abhorrence and deteſtation; ſo that the hatred with which I now hated them, was greater than the love wherewith I had loved them. It was here that the uſe of my intellectual powers was reſtored to me, which before were bound up in a ſtupifying, dead ſleep, as to ſpiritual things; and by the mighty, powerful working of the Holy Ghoſt, the ſcales fell from my eyes, and I was made to ſee God and Chriſt, ſin and death, heaven and hell, time and eternity in their true appearance. I found that the things which are ſeen are but temporal,

ral, but the things which are inviſible are eternal.

But here Satan finding a mutiny excited within, and that I began to be weary of my old maſter, attempted to bring me into utter deſtruction and deſpair: whilſt the ſtrong man kept the houſe all was in peace, but finding he could no longer hold the fort of my ſoul, and that a ſtronger than he was about to diſpoſſeſs him, he began to rake in the dunghill of my unclean heart, ſo that I ſaw every thought and imagination of my ſoul was wicked and abominable; this ſtruck me with aſtoniſhment, and ſuch conſternation as was ready to ſink me into the ground. And now being almoſt diſtracted with the fiery darts and blaſphemous injections of Satan, my ſleepy conſcience was thoroughly awakened, and my many notorious ſins, with all their aggravating circumſtances, ſet in order before me; whereby I was driven almoſt to my wit's end. Thus went matters with me for about a fortnight.

Ever ſince my ſickneſs in Auguſt, I was mightily ſubject to ſtrange terrors, ariſing ſometimes from external accidents and hidden natural cauſes, uncouth viſions, and apparitions full of amazement and fear; and juſt about converſion, I was fiercely and terribly aſſaulted by the horrible temptations of the Devil; and all this to my apprehenſions, at the very door of eternity; I reckoned myſelf *free among the dead*, which repreſented theſe great and momentous concerns ſo near, and to the life, and gave ſuch

a true and vivid idea of them, that they left very deep impreſſions upon my ſpirit, and cauſed me to paſs through the new birth with great obſervation.

On the 17th of March, being Sabbath-day, in the morning, I was under ſore perplexings of ſpirit, and knew not what would become of me: but when all were gone out, I ſat down, and very remarkably, there lay a little book before me on the counter, which when I took up, I found to be the life of John Bunyan, ſo I began to read with a trembling ſoul, and reading, ſaw my own caſe exactly deſcribed, which ſomewhat allayed my fears. O how ſuitable was that book to my then deſperate condition! but when I read the paragraph, 175, wherein he ſays, "That if he muſt periſh, it ſhall once be "ſaid, that ſuch an one died at the foot of "Chriſt in prayer." O the powerful energy! the wonderful immediate workings of the Bleſſed Spirit I then felt! what an amazing light ſtruck into my heart! it gave preſently ſuch a mighty turn to my ſoul as can never be expreſt. I laid down the book, and fell into a paſſion of weeping, but indeed it was a fit of overpowering joy. I now ſet to my ſeal that God is true, and that whoever comes to Chriſt he will in no wiſe caſt out. Thus was I ſnatched, as it were, out of the very belly of hell; then reaching forth to heaven, I cried out with tears, Ah! this is the bleſſed Jeſus againſt whom I have all this while been ſinning! who I now underſtood had done ſo much for me! my heart was

filled

filled with peace that paſſeth all underſtanding; yea, with joy unſpeakable and full of glory. I had a taſte given me of the hidden manna, and knew what that white ſtone means, which none knows but he that hath it.

Thus I remained for ſome conſiderable time, night and day, in unutterable joy, to think that ever Heaven ſhould be given to ſuch a caſt-away as I. O the height! O the depth of redeeming Love! here I taſted and ſaw that God was Love, the Fountain the Element of love.—Now the reſtleſs wanderings of my immortal ſoul began to center and to fix upon God in Chriſt as its higheſt good and everlaſting portion, and never till now did I know what an heaven it is to be freed from the torment of *unſatisfied deſire*; all the days of my unregeneracy I was perpetually diſquieted with irkſome wiſhes and unanſwered longings; ever deſiring, never ſatiated; when I thought myſelf happieſt, I ſtill wanted ſomething, which the whole creation could not yield; and the reaſon is plain, as Auſtin ſays, *the rational ſoul made in the likeneſs of God, can find here no full ſatisfaction, for it being capable of enjoying God, can be ſatisfied with nothing but God.*

I now addreſſed myſelf to much reading the Holy Scriptures, which were to me as never before heard of, ſuch a wretched ſtranger was I to my Bible. I found much eſtabliſhing power and efficacy from John vi. 44. "No man can come to me except the Father which ſent me draw him." I was much concerned leſt all

ſhould

ſhould not be right; for I conſidered the ſalvation of my ſoul as a matter of the laſt importance, and the evidence of ſo vile a wretch being brought into a juſtified ſtate had need be very ſtrong and plain; then came into my mind Jer. xiii. 23 "Can the Ethiopian change his ſkin, &c." So that I ſaw that it was as impoſſible for the bent of an unregenerate heart to be turned from its luſts, as to remove the leopard's ſpots, without omnipotent renewing grace; by that my ſoul was entirely changed.

I continued for ſome time full of comfort, under the influence of that light which darted into the dark dungeon of my mind. I was made a partaker of the divine nature, and I knew it: all this while I held my peace and ſaid not a word to any of the unſpeakable joy I felt in my ſoul, nor did any know of my wonderful converſion.

But ſoon the hour of darkneſs and temptation came, and my ſoul went down the hill apace. As faith weakened, corruption gained ſtrength. How tottering did I walk, ready to give over all for loſt every moment; unſtable as water, and thruſt through with every temptation. Thus was I rent and torn as by a thunderbolt, through the violence of my own corruptions and Satan's temptations, all the ſummer, night and day—I ſcarcely enjoyed one night free from the horrid ſuggeſtions and moleſtations of the Devil; ſo that in my ſleep, when I was incapable of making any reſiſtance, my ſoul was filled with blaſphemous

thoughts

thoughts and imaginations, ſo prodigiouſly vile and deteſtable, that a wicked heart muſt have trembled at them. My bed which ſhould have given ſome eaſe to my languiſhing body and tired ſpirits, became to me a dungeon of fears and place of greateſt torment: there was no place nor time in which my ſins and Satan's aſſaults did not diſtreſs me; my corruptions were too hard for me, and at the very point of ruining my ſoul; and what to do I knew not. I was become as parched ground, and an habitation for dragons; full of all abominable luſts and fiery temptations, my life abhorred bread, and my ſoul dainty meat, my fleſh conſumed away, that it could not be ſeen, and my bones ſtuck out; yea my ſoul drew near to the grave, and my life to the deſtroyer. When I ſaid, my bed ſhall comfort me, my couch ſhall eaſe my complaint, then was I ſcared with dreams and terrified with viſions, ſo that my ſoul choſe ſtrangling and death rather than life; ſo worn and conſumed was I, that I had no reliſh for food, no pleaſure of life, or almoſt any ſenſe left in me; I appeared to the view of others a mere ſkeleton, expreſſing nothing but ſinews and bones; and in the midſt of all this, through ſhame and baſhfulneſs, my tongue was ſo locked up that I could diſcloſe my extremity to none; by which Satan gained dreadful advantages. I could meet with nothing from the pulpit that came near my caſe; I often went home from ſermon with a hungry ſoul, and bitterly wept and cried "The young children

children ask bread, and none breaks it unto them." And such was the power of unbelief and despair, that I thought I heard Christ, even Jesus himself, saying often unto me those words, Matt. xxiii. 33, "How can you escape the damnation of hell!"

Yet was I not without all relief, I had some glimmering hopes in these dark periods, as that, Is. lvii. 16, "I will not contend forever," &c. Is. liv. 11, and xxxv. 10, and Job xxxiii Chap. were very encouraging; also 1 Cor. x. 13. had some influence upon me. "There hath no temptation taken you but such as is common to mon;" for this was the conceit I was so strongly possest with, that my case was like nobody's beside. And now I often thought on Rev. xii. 12. "The Devil is come unto you in great wrath, because he knoweth he hath but a short time;" for all this while I walked on the verge of eternity, looking every moment when I should launch out into that boundless and bottomless ocean.

But notwithstanding I tasted some of those springs of comfort, yet Satan prevailed so that I could enjoy no rest, but whatever I did, read, heard, thought, or looked on, was presently wrested and empoisoned by blasphemous temptations; yea, with such an horrible, monstrous conceit did Satan one night fill my imagination, that I could neither sit nor stand, but was just as one possessed by him; tossing up and down for horror and anguish of spirit, thinking no less than that

that I had ſinned the unpardonable Sin againſt the Holy Ghoſt.

Under the amazing power of ſtrong temptation I was held a long time; roaring out in the bitterneſs of my ſoul as one unable to wreſtle with the terrors of the Almighty. I counted every ſermon I heard my laſt; every time I ſaw a faithful miniſter of Chriſt, the laſt; every day my laſt: this, ſaid I, may be the evening of the day of my viſitation, and O! thought I, where are the everlaſting habitations prepared for my ſoul! Oft did I ſend up theſe words to heaven with ſtrong cries and tears: O that it might yet be the accepted time! that it might yet be the day of ſalvation! O the pitiable groanings of my wounded ſpirit! my watery eyes, from morning to night, my pale cheeks, my ghaſtly looks, my weak and trembling joints ſpake out to all, the unfeigned depths of my ſpiritual dolors.

Now would theſe ſcriptures ſtrike me thro', Prov. i. 24, "Becauſe I called and ye refuſed, I ſtretched out my hand and ye regarded not, I alſo will laugh at your calamity, and mock now your fear is come; now you may call, but I will not anſwer; you may ſeek me early, but you ſhall not find me."

Once having been harraſſed by the Devil all the day long, I ſat down at night, and taking the Bible into my hand, I caſt my eye upon Jer. xv. 4, "Then ſaid the Lord, tho' Moſes and Samuel ſtood before me, yet my mind could not be towards this people; caſt them out

of

of my ſight, and let them go forth:" theſe were cutting words; I received them as if the Lord had ſaid reſpecting me, "I'll hearken to no terms, I cannot be reconciled to him; my ſoul abhors him; caſt him out of my ſight." And I think the very next morning that flaming paſſage faſtened upon me, Rom. ix. 22, "What if God willing to ſhew his wrath and make his power known, endure with much long ſuffering the veſſels of wrath fitted for deſtruction."

Whenever I got me any book, to try if by ſearching I might meet with ſome good word of hope, it was preſently ſuggeſted to me that my increaſing knowledge would but increaſe my ſorrow, and that every ſermon I heard would aggravate my approaching damnation. One time coming home from ſermon I eagerly graſped the Bible, and with many tears paſſionately cried out "What! muſt I be left everlaſtingly to periſh with this book in my hand, which ſo plainly diſcovers to me the way of life? muſt I go to hell by the gates of heaven?" and here I found Mr. Howe's *Redeemer's Tears* of unſpeakable uſe to me; I bleſs God that I ever ſaw that book, it proved a mighty preſervative of hope, and kept me from ſinking down in *deſpair*.

I was now ſenſible that none but Chriſt could comfort me; ſo I gave myſelf unto prayer; never ſo well as when alone at prayer; I was much in ſecret, wreſtling with God: wherever I went, and whatever I did, ſtill my ſoul was earneſtly pleading at the throne of grace,

grace, always in a praying frame, but ſtill I thought I was void of all faith; and tho' through carnal fear and ſhame, frightened by Satan's temptations, I could never unboſom my diſtreſs to any one; yet by the aſſiſtance of the Spirit I had that humble freedom and holy boldneſs given me, that thereby I often ſtrengthened my weary ſoul in my bittereſt agonies; hither had I recourſe continually, from whence Satan's moſt deſperate aſſaults could never drive me.

Much about this time, I heard that Mr. W. Payne,* a faithful miniſter of Chriſt, was in town, which exceedingly revived me, intending to go and make known my condition to him; but alas! when I came into his preſence, my tongue clave to the roof of my mouth, I could not utter one word; and ſo I came home as full of anguiſh and horror as I went; however, I got up early next morning, and to him I went again; but to as little purpoſe, for I could by no means declare my mind: the truth is, my caſe was ſo ſtrange and uncouth, and my temptations were of that prodigious blaſphemous nature, that I dared not name them; and therefore it was impoſſible I ſhould ever receive any verbal ſatisfaction about them.

Dreadful was the anguiſh, terror, and amazement of ſpirit, which the blaſphemous injections of Satan would put me into: what twitchings, and ſhootings, and tremblings, would every blaſphemous thought cauſe *even in my outward*

* Of Saffron Walden.

outward man! neither were they any way abated when I laid me down to reſt; ſleep I had none; *ſlumbring* was all that I had for months together: I may ſafely ſay that for full four months I had not one wink of that ſound, undiſturbed ſleep I was wont to enjoy in the days of my unregeneracy.

By this time my body was brought to a very ſkeleton, through the terrors of the Lord which beſet me round; ſo that at the latter end of Aug. 1706, I was forced into the country to revive languiſhing nature; but the chief end I had in view was to have recourſe to ſome ſpiritual phyſician, for a cordial for my fainting ſoul; and therefore went to Saffron Walden, to Mr. Payne's, under whom I was brought up, and with whom I thought I could uſe the utmoſt freedom. But whatever I told him, I had ſtill ſome ſecret reſerve in my own breaſt, and whatever he replied to me, I could eaſily except againſt or evade it. I thought my circumſtances were of a nature quite different from any others; and if perſons did but know them, they would utterly abhor me.

Thus did the Lord withdraw himſelf, and leave me for a while to ſtruggle with my ſpiritual adverſaries, to make me ſenſible of my own weakneſs, to abate my pride, and to cauſe me to look to the rock that is higher than I. But now comes the comfortable dawning after this long black tempeſtuous night.

The very morning I returned out of the country, being Sept. 2d by a ſudden accident in the

the ſtreet, I was awaked out of ſleep about two o'clock, and methought I ſaw heaven opened before me; whereupon I inſtantly raiſed up myſelf with a moſt ſtrong and fervent ejaculation to Chriſt, and ſaid, Lord, grant me thy ſpirit, and the free uſe of thy word! which I could not before look into, but every word would be preſently wreſted from me, and my mind be poſſeſſed with filth and blaſphemy. I was alſo much in prayer to God on this account the day before; which the Lord Jeſus was pleaſed to anſwer far above all expectation. Two or three days after I came home, I took a Bible in my hand, remembering my former requeſt, and read John xv. 1, 5, "I am the true vine, &c." It may be at another time I might have read theſe words fifty times over, and have found no more ſavour in them than in the white of an egg; but now the ſet time was come, and precious words they were to my ſoul. O what a change was there in a moment! now the chains fell off in which I thought I muſt have been bound for ever. In an inſtant my former experiences were brought to mind; wherein I was made to ſee that the great and bleſſed work of faith was wrought in my heart by the Spirit of God, tho' it had been hidden and beclouded by manifold corruptions and temptations: and I began to muſe upon former manifeſtations, and to call to mind the days of the right hand of the moſt High with abundant joy. I ſaw that as God in ſovereign grace had ſnatched me as a brand out of the

burning, and drawn me to his Son, ſo I muſt continually depend upon him for ſpiritual ſupplies, and that if he left me to myſelf, I could not ſtand a moment; and how many ſcriptures came flocking into my mind, with life and power, as Philip. i. 6, Rom. ii. 29. 1 Theſſ. v. 24.

Thus I remained for ſome time without any remarkable alteration; but afterwards my heart again became very heavy; for now this manifeſtation began to abate and diſappear, corruptions aſſailed me afreſh with renewed and redoubled vigour, and Satan ſtill diſcharged his envenomed darts with too much ſucceſs, ſo that I ſaid as in 2 Chron. xx. 12. "I know not what to do, but my eyes are up unto thee." In theſe temptations I was, by the providence of God, directed to Mr. Gurnall's *Chriſtian in Complete Armour*; a book well worth its weight in gold; each page filled with ſuch heavenly treaſure, practical truths, and rich experiences, ſo plain and intelligible, and with all ſo moving and affecting, that I could ſeldom look into it with a dry eye. All that winter long the peruſing it ſet me a hungering and thirſting after God and Chriſt. Oh! what tenderneſs of heart, what melting and relenting, what weeping for ſin! now no day paſt me in which my face was not wet with tears. What redeeming of time! now I thought much of the loſt minute, that was not ſpent in reading, writing, praying, or diſcourſing of the things of another world, grudging even my time for meat

meat and ſleep! What compaſſion for immortal ſouls! the Lord knows how often I have wiſhed my head waters, and my eyes fountains of tears, that I might weep day and night for precious ſouls, and have many times been more enlarged at a throne of grace on their accounts than mine own! I pitied them as one that knew the terrors of the Lord. I now wondered how miniſters could preach and pray, and talk no more affectionately of the great things of another world, wherein mens' ſouls are ſo nearly concerned: I wondered how they could come out of the pulpit, and not ſhed a tear over them! when I conſidered that all thoſe ſouls muſt be ſaved now, or loſt for ever, I ſtood amazed at the ſtupidity and unconcern of moſt perſons, and thought if they ſaw as I did the the worth of their ſouls, they would not ſo fondly trifle with the concerns of eternity.

Delivered from the violent aſſaults of Satan, for a month or ſix weeks, I lived involved in ſecret raptures, and enjoyed a heaven upon earth. O that golden ſpot and pearl of my life! This was a time of love indeed! Had any one in thoſe days aſked me, what is thy beloved more than another beloved? I could eaſily have informed him, from my own inward feelings and experience, that he was the chiefeſt of ten thouſand, and altogether lovely.

Now my ſoul was ſoaring aloft upon the wings of faith; I found I had loſt nothing in the furnace of tribulation but my droſs, and forgetting the things that are behind, I

preſs forward, reaching forth to what is ſtill before.

Being thus comfortably eſtabliſhed, for the glory of God, and further edification of my own ſoul, I acquainted the Rev. Matthew Clark, (whoſe miniſtry I experienced to be ſingularly accompanied with the divine preſence) with my deſire to walk in all the ordinances and appointments of Chriſt, in communion with that church under his care, and having given ſome ſatisfactory account of God's dealings with my ſoul, was accordingly received into fellowſhip with them.

Thus have I declared my afflictions of ſoul, and alſo the end of the Lord; and we ſee the Lord is very pitiful, and of tender mercy. Let none then, for my ſake, deſpair either for the moſt horrid temptations, or the moſt inveterate corruptions, for none could have been in a more hopeleſs, helpleſs condition in the preſent ſtate than I was, and yet I have found the grace of Chriſt abundantly ſufficient for me. Oh, little did I think I ſhould live as at this day, to report the goodneſs of God to me, and talk of the wonders of redeeming love! Thus doth tribulation work patience, and patience, experience; and experience, hope; and hope maketh not aſhamed, becauſe the love of God is ſhed abroad in my heart; and verily God hath dealt with me as with Job, and bleſt me with twice as much as I had before. It is marvellous to behold the mighty alteration my ſoul has ſeen, ſince it was plunged in the waters of tribulation;

tribulation; nothing ſhort of the exceeding greatneſs of the power of God could have effected ſo aſtoniſhing a work: and the Lord has no leſs commended his wiſdom and love to me, in my building up and eſtabliſhment, than in my firſt converſion; he hath borne me as upon eagle's wings, and hath ſaid concerning me, I will work, and who ſhall let it:—may his name have all the glory!

The Editor of these Memoirs begs leave to observe, that in the original manuscript, the Author has expatiated in a very large and pleasing manner upon the different states of his mind, as represented in the preceding account; but since in his future observations, he recurs again to the same views of divine truth, the conciseness of the extracts will be excused.

April 6, 1708.

I HAD this day but little time to converſe with God, much leſs to record the intercourſe that paſt between him and my ſoul; but how *ſhort ſoever*, it was *exceeding ſweet*. I obſerved this difference, and growth in grace, ſince my laſt retired converſe with God, in the ſame place *, Greenwich Park, April 1707. viz. Whereas I then moſtly rejoiced in a ſenſe of God's love, and the ſecret conſciouſneſs of my own felicity; now, I continually cried out with unutterable longings, and pure deſires to glorify God! Father, ſaid I, thou knoweſt my heart; thou knoweſt for what end I came hither, even to pray that I may glorify thee in body and ſoul, in life and death, in time and to all eternity: I come not hither to pray for my ſalvation, to ſeek after pardon and peace; I know I am *thine*, I am thine for ever! But, Lord, I long to *glorify* thee; it will never ſatisfy me to be ſaved unleſs I glorify thee—let me but glorify thy name, and deal as thou wilt with me! I will then rejoice and triumph in whatever condition I may be! without this, Lord, I can take no comfort, even in the thoughts of my own ſalvation. This is the

* His loved place of ſecluſion from the concerns of the world.

very

very life and ſoul of all my joys; thou who knoweſt all things, knoweſt, Oh! how doleful is it, for ſuch an *one as I*, after all that vaſt experience I have had of thy miraculous grace, to remain in this world as a dry, withering, barren tree.

Theſe earneſt prayers for extraordinary grace, were occaſioned by my removing into the hurrying noiſes of a diſtracting world, and the company of carnal perſons, after I had ſpent two years from my converſion in ſweet retirement, converſing only with God and Chriſt, heaven and immortality, my heart was ſo ſet upon ſpiritual objects, and ſwallowed up with the thoughts of things unſeen, that I was almoſt always, even in my ſleep, either conflicting with Satan, or converſing with God, his Scriptures, his children. I had commonly either good and holy dreams, or horrible ſuggeſtions from the Devil, my mind ſtill running upon the eternal world; and from this ſhort intercourſe with Chriſt, I learned this, that one hour ſpent with God, is better than a thouſand elſewhere.

At my coming away I ſaid, none ever more than I deſerved to be thrown into hell, yet ſhall I never come there; ſuch is the boundleſs grace of God! none was ever more unworthy to be admitted into heaven, yet ſhall I be placed among Cherubims and Seraphims! ſuch, ſuch is the amazing freeneſs of his love!

April

April 12, 1708

UPON my firſt remove,* I was terribly borne down, and almoſt overwhelmed with diſcouragement; my mind was beclouded with ſuch darkneſs, through a variety of thoughts, that I hardly knew *where* or *what* I was.

I was ſeized with a ſtrange and extraordinary weakneſs, through an exceſſive cold, and utterly deſpaired of going through that fatigue and hurry which I knew I muſt expect.

Satan took the advantage, and exaſperated my corruptions, and thereby ſorely aſſaulted and buffetted me.

But this was not all: there was another thing very diſcouraging (which indeed ſtruck deepeſt into my heart) and that was, I could ſee but little of Chriſt, little or nothing of the life and power of godlineſs in thoſe I had moſt to do with; but much, ah! too much of the contrary.

Theſe things, with many more, did all conſpire to overcaſt my fair day of ſpiritual enjoyments, concurrently ſtriking at my faith, and thereby weakening my holdfaſt of the Saviour.

But it laſted only for a while: it was not long ere that victorious grace of faith freſhly aided

* At this time he changed his habitation.

aided by the Spirit of Jeſus, glorioufly triumphed over all, and ſet her feet upon the neck of theſe her enemies. The Sun of righteouſneſs, as impatient of delay, quickly broke in upon my ſoul thro' that gloomy cloud, and with his heavenly beams ſcattered my fears, diſpelled thoſe miſts of darkneſs aud diſconſolation; ſo much the more comforting and eſtabliſhing me, by all my former ſhakings and dejections, and out of the depths has raiſed my ſoul to a triumphant and joyful frame.

'Tis commonly obſerved, even reſpecting *true converts*, few retain that intenſeneſs of zeal and ardency of ſpirit which they uſually diſcover at their firſt turning to God; they work apace, ſhine fair, love much, carry it extraordinarily, and ſeem for the preſent to outſtrip all others in the way to heaven; but after awhile they tire, and theſe affections flag, and they forget the love of their eſpouſals; but oh! how afflicting will it be to me, and how wounding to my ſoul, if I am not helped to add one degree of grace to another, to the very laſt breath I draw upon earth! I hope the nearer I approach to death and eternity, the nearer I draw to the center of my ſoul, the ſwifter will my motion be to it, and the more ſteady and unmixed my deſires for it.

I would

I would fain keep up with the forwardeſt ſoul that ever breathed the life of grace upon earth; but this hurrying, entangling world will not let me: Well! well! I am *here*, but, my heart is in *heaven*; I dwell with *mortals*, but I converſe with *immortality*. Tho' grace may now ſeem aſleep for a time, and lie buried in this winter ſeaſon of hurries and corruptions it ſhall ere long ſpring forth as the morning light, and awake in everlaſting glory.

I would be diligent and faithful in my *particular calling*; but it ſhall know its *place*; it ſhall ever give way to heavenly employments; I will always infinitely prefer my ſpiritual calling, and ſpend the flower of my affections and time in the moſt zealous and eager proſecution of it; and never may I alter this my juſt reſolution! for who ſees not, that the leaſt improvement and advantage for eternity far outweighs all the profitable incomes of time. Oh! to add but one cubit to our ſpiritual ſtature! to increaſe but the leaſt degree in faith and love! to gain but one ſtep in our heavenly race! to win but one inch of ground upon our adverſaries! to enjoy but one hour's uninterrupted communion with God, is far more worthy to be minded, and earneſtly to be coveted, than all the affairs of this tranſitory life, and the pleaſures of ten thouſand worlds! the *one* is confined to time, the *other* will abide with us to eternity.

Oh! I am an unprofitable ſervant, and leſs than the leaſt of all God's mercies; the Lord has done *more* for me, but I have done *leſs* for him than thouſands. I often think with grief and confuſion of face, how Mary loved; how Peter loved; how Paul laboured, and of the words of my dear Saviour, "to whom much is forgiven the ſame loveth much." I have been a very flagitious and profligate ſinner, and a very unthankful, cold, barren convert: unfruitful towards God, and unprofitable to ſouls; and yet, bleſſed be God for Jeſus Chriſt! in heaven I ſhall love, adore and glorify to the utmoſt ſtretch of my moſt enlarged deſires.

July 12, 1708.

WITH what joy did I this day behold the face of that worthy ſervant of Chriſt, Mr. W. P.* at the ſight of whom the remembrance of my condition this time two years ſtrangely reviving, what thoughts ſprang immediately in my mind! Lord God of heaven! what wonders haſt thou wrought for me ſince this ſervant of thine was laſt in London! how haſt thou gone forth in the power of thine own love! and taken pleaſure to magnify thine own mercy! Oh! the mighty, glorious alteration my ſoul has undergone ſince that time! July, 1706. I was then in the midſt of my dreadful temptations,

* Mr. W. Payne of Saffron Walden.

temptations, and ſwallowed up in the depths of horror and deſpair. I looked upon myſelf as a loſt creature, gone to all eternity; my body lay trembling under the terrors of God, and my ſoul refuſed to be comforted; my fleſh was waſted away by inceſſant conflicts with the Devil, my ſpirit lay groaning and bleeding within me, ſtruck through with the arrows of the Almighty. Oh! the agonies, the tears, the tortures! I was ſunk ſo deep in the gulph of deſperation as if I had been plunged into the pit of damnation. I ſtood hovering over the abyſs of a miſerable eternity, looking every moment to be ingulphed! I walked about the ſtreets as a damned ghoſt, and ſtill thought I heard the thunder of that dreadful voice, ſounding over my head "You muſt go into everlaſting puniſhment." But ſay, O my ſoul! is it thus with thee now? by how glorious a reverſe are things altered! for ſince that time, what floods of comfort! what heavens of joy! what views of glory! how oft haſt thou been up with thy beloved in the mount, and there been kiſſed with the kiſſes of his love, and ſealed with the irrevocable obſignation of his ſpirit! O the heights and depths of God's Love to me! "Why ſayeſt thou now, O Jacob," &c. vid. Iſ. xl. 27, 28, 29.

Wherever I am going, I am ſtill groaning out theſe deſires, Oh! that I might die! Oh!

that I could depart to be with Jesus! but alas! my soul, thou livest too *slowly* to die *so soon*; thou groweſt not *fast enough* to be so quickly mown—more grace, my soul, before glory comes.

My heart cannot conceive a deeper thought, nor my tongue utter an higher word, and more expressive and comprehensive of all the desires of my heart, than this one, *to be with Christ!*

Sept.

Well might my soul be overwhelmed with thoughts of unutterable rapture, and floods of inexplicable bliss! well might she be ravished with ecstasies of joy, and even *overcome* with her own felicity, at the apprehension of her *happy conversion* to Christ! for before, surely, I was the most miserable creature under heaven; I could take pleasure in nothing; with the prodigal, I had nothing left to think of, but to be unspeakably miserable in this world, and that to come. Nothing but darkness and discomfort here, and woe in the future state; horror in *hand* and damnation in *view!* then to be converted! oh! then to be taken out of the doleful dungeon of sorrow and despair, and married to the Lord of Glory! put into the possession of the ever-blessed Deity! made an heir of God, and coheir with Christ! entitled to all that glory which the soul of man is capable of bearing,

and

and pleaſures more than it can graſp; to be aſſured of the divine favour, and to be happy as its powers will admit! oh! this was fetching me from the depths of horror to the heights of joy; from the *loweſt hell*, to *Abraham's boſom*. And truly, while I was under the power of that marvellous change, I had thoſe raiſed and real, cloſe and affecting, elevated and ſpiritual conceptions of Chriſt and divine things, and ſo great an alienation from all terreſtrial objects, as I expect not to *re-enjoy* till I change this mortal for immortality.

Feb. 7, 1709.

THE heavenly country peoples apace! Oh! my ſoul, how they crowd the gates, and throng the ſtreets of the New Jeruſalem! they fly as a cloud, and flock as doves to their windows. How many bright ſtars and peerleſs jewels have left of late this our ſphere, to ſhine in glory. Scarce a day ſees its period but tidings are brought thee, of one or another, who is gone to take poſſeſſion of the inheritance which is incorruptible and undefiled for ever. *Now* thou art told of two chriſtian heroines, under the *ſame roof*, a *mother* and a *daughter*, who could even challenge the king of terrors, and fired with longings after an unſeen Saviour, wiſhed and prayed their ſouls away into the boſom of their beloved.

And canſt thou *contentedly* ſtand ſtill, and wiſtly look on, whilſt theſe thus get to heaven before thee, finiſh their courſe, and receive their crowns? For ſhame, my ſoul, rouze up thy ſluggiſh powers! when wilt thou advance a ſtep nearer unto glory? Oh! that thou couldſt at length follow hard after God, and purſue the mark for the heavenly prize! art thou ſuch a ſtranger to the joys of thy father's houſe, as, regardleſs of the divine privileges enjoyed there, to continue lying at the door, whilſt others enter in and poſſeſs the royalties of the kingdom of God? doſt thou ſee others go in with the bridegroom to the marriage, and doſt thou not follow them with the moſt eager longings? paſſionately crying out in the pathetic expoſtulation, "Oh! thou whom my ſoul loves! how long ſhall I mourn as a dove of the valley, debarred of thy bliſsful, life-giving preſence." Well, tho' their glory does a little *antedate* thine, rejoice that thy name is written in heaven, and a few moments of time will ſoon be forgotten, when once thou art entered upon that boundleſs ocean of eternity.

Sabbath-day, July 3d. 1709.

At the Lord's Supper.

AFTER I had eaten of the bread and drank of the cup, in remembrance of my dying Lord,

Lord, this thought came powerfully upon my mind.

My dear Redeemer remembers and knows what infinite affection he bare towards me, when he was expiring upon the croſs. He remembers full well, what agonies and pangs, what wrath and terror, both in body and ſoul, he freely endured for my ſake; and this ſame Jeſus at this moment looks down into my heart, and obſerves there the workings of my love towards him. With what kind of *reſentment* I entertain the thought of that exceſs of kindneſs which carried him to the croſs for me! But ah! what return doth he find? ſcarce a glimmering ſpark of ſpiritual affection to anſwer his infinite flame of love! ſtand aſtoniſhed, O heavens, at this! let the Angels bluſh! bluſh rather, Oh! my ſoul, at this vile and horrid ingratitude, this ſhameful undervaluing of his love!

October, 10, 1709.

WHAT glory is due to the great ſource of being, who has placed me in ſo high a rank in his creation. Since he decreed me a being, he might have aſſigned me the nature of a much inferior creature; he might have ſet me among inanimate ſtocks and ſtones; or he might have given me the

vegetative

vegetative life, and denied me the *animal*; or he might have given me the *ſenſitive* life, and withheld the *rational*: and ſo I might have ſprung up with the *trees* of the field, or have herded with *beaſts*, ſwam with *fiſhes*, roved with *birds*, and have *periſhed with them*. 'Twas an act of divine ſovereignty to diſtinguiſh me with a reaſonable and immortal nature—but, my God, hadſt thou reſted here, and dignified me with no other than my firſt creation, happy would it have been for me had my mother's womb been my grave! I ſhould bleſs the condition of the meaneſt inſect, and deem annihilation a mercy! for as by the nobleneſs of my nature, and more exalted powers, I excel them in a poſſibility of bleſſedneſs, ſo am I proportionably capacitated to undergo more exquiſite ſorrows and deeper infelicity; and by reaſon of that original univerſal defection which has affected the whole race of apoſtate Adam, 'tis to the latter I ſtand awfully and inevitably expoſed, were I privileged with the *mere dignity of human nature*. But oh! here break out the illuſtrious beams of redeeming grace, and the glorious works of the new creation! In how exuberant a manner has the divine Goodneſs laid itſelf out for my ſalvation, and how *becoming* a God ſo rich in mercy; how great the kindneſs of the regenerating Spirit! who has favoured me with a ſecond, a ſpiritual birth, and ennobled my ſoul with the commenced portraiture and lineaments of the divine image. What love is this! not only to create

me

me a reaſonable being, but to make me a participant of the divine nature.

October, 24, 1709.

COME, O my ſoul, and recount what unparalleled grace has done for thee ſince this day five years! and be raviſhed with the ſight of ſo bleſſed a change! be aſtoniſhed at the wonders of divine love, which has ſo triumphantly diſplayed its unbounded greatneſs, in miraculouſly reſcuing thee from the jaws of ruin, and crowning thee with all the felicities of a *created being!* When I had brought myſelf to the utmoſt ſtrait, forſaken and abandoned of all hopes of comfort, that then God ſhould ſpread open his inviting arms, and bid me reſt my weary ſpirit in his tender boſom! O my ſoul, how unaccountably waſt thou allured and enchanted with the *fading beauty of a mortal creature!* that minding neither God, nor Chriſt, nor eternity, nor the dreadful dangers of thine unpardoned ſtate, thou waſt quite ſwallowed up with that beloved object, and placed all thy happineſs and heaven *in her dying charms!* Lord! I cannot reflect on that day but with joy and triumph, conſidering the change I have ſince undergone! it is meet I ſhould joy and glory in the remembrance of what ſo tends to enhance

hance the greatneſs of thine all victorious love! O the pleaſures that continually tranſport this happy breaſt, which was once *tyrannized* over by many lawleſs paſſions, and commanded by every trifling vanity; but bleſſed Jeſus, while I rejoice in my preſent ſtate, I grieve at the folly of my former conduct; that I ſhould ſo paſſionately affect *a fading worm*, and overlook the love of a *dying Redeemer!* that I ſhould be pleaſed with a *drop*, and diſaffect the *fountain!* that I ſhould adore the *creature*, and ſlight the *creator!* that I ſhould ſo admire an earthly beauty, and not *thee* the author of all perfection! O melt and mourn, my ſoul, bluſh and be aſhamed that thou ſhouldeſt ſet thine heart upon a mortal fair, and place thine happineſs in ſuch an empty creature, neglecting the ſupreme and ſovereign good!—Oh! my ſoul, how juſt an occaſion haſt thou to reflect with pity on the vaniſhing ſplendor of all terreſtrial glory, and with tears to bedew thoſe unhappy people, who know no higher and more durable felicity than the unſatisfying delights of the *preſent world*; for ah! how ſoon will the ſun of all worldly pleaſures ſet in the ocean of endleſs ſorrows, and thoſe numerous crowds of immortal beings, that now ſtand gazing on this pompous pageantry, muſt ſhortly appear in a more auguſt aſſembly, to receive the ſentence of their final doom.

October 1, 1710.

ARISE, my ſoul! and adoring trace the foot-ſteps of the mighty Jeſus, in the glorious atchievement of thy redemption; think ſeriouſly and affectionately what he has already done for thee *on the croſs*, and what he is now doing for thee *on the throne*. Fain would I dwell more upon the heights and depths, and lengths and breadths of the divine love! how ſeldom does my ſoul break forth into any ſuitable admiration thereof! how *few* are the hours wherein this amazing love appears to me in its excellent glory, and overwhelming greatneſs! O for a more free and unconfined ſurvey of diſtinguiſhing grace! how ſeldom does the glory of mine immortal crown *ſparkle* in mine eye! ſtrange, that a ſoul redeemed by the precious blood of an incarnate God, can forbear looking into that ſtupendous complication and illuſtration of *grace* and *wiſdom*! What ails this lazy, lukewarm ſoul? what ſpiritual ſickneſs, or inviſible decay, has inſenſibly vitiated thy palate, that thou doſt not taſte more of the ſweetneſs of *honey* in ſpiritual things? how ſeldom doſt thou appear like the bride of the bleſſed Jeſus, who will ere long take thee to his arms, and ſet an eternal crown of joy and glory on thy head! How rarely do the graces and conſolations of the ſpirit ſhine forth

forth in their proper and beautiful luſtre, allur-ing others into the net of the Goſpel! How are the raviſhing pleaſures of religion *un-known*, its amiable ſweetneſs and glory *veiled*, its matchleſs and unſpeakable advantages *con-cealed*, for want of a more open and ample de-monſtration and exerciſe of a *divine life!* That light which ſhould ſhine to the illumi-nation of the ſimple, unconverted beholder, how is it put under a buſhel, confined to re-tirement, and buried in the boſom! thoſe *tears* that ſhould flow at the ſight of Chriſtleſs ſinners, and melt thee into compaſſion to their precious, immortal, but alas! periſhing ſouls! how are they contracted into *an unprofitable ſigh*, or *ſecret weeping!* that indignation and zeal which ſhould fire thy breſt and teſtify thine abhorrence of the outbreakings of ſin in thyſelf, thy relations, thy brethren, or the world; how does it ſhamefully hide its head, and lie *dormant within*, to the diſhonour of God, the triumph of Satan, and injury of ſouls! Oh! for the time when my love to God, which is now ſo weak and wavering, ſhall become a conſtant, pure flame! When my hatred of ſin ſhall glow as bright as that of a Seraph, and all the faculties of my ſoul receive their higheſt elevation, utmoſt enlarge-ment, and laſt perfection! When my ſmall, and now often intermitted joys ſhall be heightened into perpetual ecſtaſy, where my enjoyment of Jeſus will be full, and my viſion of him uninterrupted to eternity! How long

will

will that kind and compaſſionate bridegroom, that mighty and adored Redeemer, ſuffer his tempted and diſconſolate ſpouſe to ſit deſolate in the wilderneſs, grieving at the abſence of her beloved! What mean *theſe tears* in the eyes, and *ſighs* from the heart of an heir of glory! what clouds are theſe that overcaſt the *face*, what ſorrows that ſadden the *brow* of a pardoned and ranſomed ſoul! who is this that appears like a mourner in Zion, looking to the *croſs of Jeſus?* what mean all theſe ſhowers of fiery darts that fly ſo fierce and dreadful! whence are theſe mighty and malicious blows dealt by the hands of *inviſible adverſaries*! what mean theſe falls and riſings, theſe *ſhouts* of the conquerors, and *groans* of the vanquiſhed! Oh! 'tis a poor tempted believer, conflicting and grappling with a threefold enemy, Sin, Satan, and the World! Now he is weeping and bleeding in the vale; ere long he ſhall be ſhining and triumphing on the throne! The god of this world rages *without*, and ſeeks to regain his wonted uſurpation. See the treacherous enemy *within*, like a reſtleſs malecontent often raiſing mutinies and tumults, ready to betray and deliver up the fort. Behold the World with her various artifices! ſometimes *flattering*, ſometimes *frowning*; now *alluring* with her charms, then *terrifying* with her ſtorms: in one hand ſhe bears *promiſes of favour*, in the other *menaces of terror*, and all to win again the affection and ſlavery of a former

vaſſal. Theſe all combine and conſpire the ruin of this precious ſoul: but the captain of his ſalvation is mighty and able to ſave and gives him an aſſurance, that tho' he *dies fighting*, he ſhall be more than conqueror.

April 27, 1711.

Returning from a viſit to ſome friends, my mind was led into the following Reflections:

YON' glorious hemiſphere! thoſe glittering ſtars! this ſoft and ſoothing breeze and fragrant fields, convey to my admiring ſoul delightful thoughts of my *great Creator!* but, bleſſed God, what ſuperior joys raviſh my recounting mind! when I think 'twas *yonder*, that *five years ago*, I enjoyed ſuch ſtrange and amazing views! I taſted ſuch pure and heavenly joys, and was honoured with ſuch near approaches and indulgent ſmiles of my gracious Lord! Oh! that I could vent my *inflamed paſſions* in ſtrains of higheſt oratory! and even diſſolve in rapture and love! that I could find words with which to *clothe* the conceptions of my mind, and tell the *world* how Chriſt has loved me! But, had I the *richeſt treaſury* of diction, alas! how ſoon would it be exhauſted, and my raptured ſoul, fired with a larger *intellectual proſpect*, attempt to purſue his

his praiſes with its *native powers*, and forget the *faultering tongue*. For what language is ſo rich, ſo copious and ſo free, as to furniſh, with apt and equal expreſſions, that mind which is raviſhed with the thought of divine love! Jeſus! I remember and adore! I cannot *expreſs*, and yet I cannot *contain*! Glory to thine adored name for ever! Hallelujah!

May 1, 1712.

THIS has been a pleaſant evening! how ſweet the forethoughts of happineſs to come! the bleſſed aſſurance of preſent right-title, and future indefeaſible enjoyment! In what cheerful ditties was my ſoul invited to proclaim her joys, when that thought came whiſpering to my mind, "'Tis not *always* to be dark and cloudy with the ſoul; 'tis not always to be a ſtate of conflict and temptation: there is a time of refreſhment coming, a time to emerge out of theſe clouds of vanity! when reſt and peace ſhall iſſue in a more *delightful ſcene*, and ſwallow up the ſoul and all its ſorrows to eternity! when a greater and more manifeſt difference ſhall be for ever put between the *ſaint* and the *ſinner*, and the heirs of glory ſhall put on their immortal robes."

O death! that charming name! to *many* the moſt *fearful* and *diſtreſſing* ſound that can

 poſſibly

poſſibly alarm them! to *me* a more *delightful accent* than the choral harmony of ten thouſand voices! Oh! heaven! thou bleſſed ſtate! where dwells the great eternal Sovereign of all my joys! endeared to me by endleſs conſiderations! by every *ſigh* and *groan* and *conflict* in this vale of tears! by every *moment's* abſence and ſeparation from my ſupreme beloved; by every *eruption* of ſin, and *indiſpoſition* to ſpiritual ſervices! endeared to me by every thought of my preſent *incapacity* to glorify God; the *narrowneſs* of the ſphere in which I act for him, and the many *poſſibilities* of his diſhonour! endeared to me by every view and freſh conviction of the *creature's vanity*, and the tranſitory nature of all ſublunary enjoyments! The imperfection of my graces, the prevalence of my corruptions, the afflictions of the world, and the unprofitableneſs of my life, join to render heaven extremely deſirable, and call to me to make haſte out of this mortal ſtate; whilſt the joy and glory, and company I ſhall meet with at my *father's houſe*, invite and draw me towards my native home.

What an encouraging argument was it to plead with God for the largeſt communications of his grace; *that the praiſes of one redeemed creature paid a greater honour to his name, than the whole inanimate creation!*

Oh! that the ſun of my life may ſet like yon' falling, glorious ſun, without cloud or eclipſe, to the ſpreading honour of the Redeemer! but if it ſhould ſeem good to infi-

nite Sovereignty to veil my *laſt moments* with obſcurity, or give me a dark and ſtormy entrance into the heavenly port; if thou, O God, willeſt to be glorified by *faith* and *reſignation*, rather than by triumphant *praiſes* and hallelujahs; thy wiſe, thy beſt, and moſt ſovereign will be accompliſhed! with joy would I receive the intimation of it! with joy, I truſt, would I part with *comforts* for *conflicts*, with *feelings* for *faith*, and with *raptures* for *groans*; for what is my heaven! O, what is my heaven! but my father's will! I never expect, I never *deſire* any other heaven than what lies within the compaſs of *conformity* to the will, *reſemblance* of the image, and *fruition* of the preſence of my Creator, *Father, Son, and Spirit*, purſuant to the platform and deſign of the covenant of grace! Let others form what ideas they pleaſe of the joys and bleſſedneſs of heaven; let them paint it in all the idle and romantic fancies of their own carnal imaginations; let them fondly dream of *Elyſian fields* and *ſtreams of chryſtal*; *celeſtial bowers*, and *richeſt fruits*, with all the *dainties* and *delights* which conſtitute a *ſenſual* paradiſe: as for me, when I come to the immediate views of my dear Redeemer, and find myſelf in the embraces of his love, and perfectly transformed into his glorious likeneſs, I know *all my deſires* will lie down and expire in the boſom of eternal reſt! I ſhall ſing and ſay, "This is the ſtate, the bleſſedneſs, the heaven I have waited for!" What was *Adam's* happineſs

before his fall, is, doubtleſs, to be the happineſs of the redeemed and renewed *reaſonable nature*; and nothing but this relation and union to the *ſupreme good* can ſatisfy the cravings of an immortal appetite! 'tis not in the power of *any creature* to be an happineſs to *itſelf*; with what colour of reaſon then, can it pretend to be a portion and happineſs to *another*? none but God in Chriſt can quench the longings and complete the felicity of a reaſonable creature!

And now, let RELIGION and its *ſacred exerciſes* and *retirements* be bantered and ridiculed by the wicked; let the happy experiences of humble ſouls, which they enjoy in private with their God, be queſtioned or deſpiſed by the *carnal* and *lukewarm* profeſſors, who are ſtrangers to the life of faith and the great myſtery of *looking to and walking with* an unſeen Jeſus; let their perſons, their faith, and their tender circumſpection, be the *ſcorn of fools*, the *drunkard's ſong*, and the *jeſt of the world*; cheer up, O ye happy ſouls! communion with God is a *glorious reality*; the experiences you profeſs are the fruits of the ſpirit, and will one day be ratified in the face of the world; and for your comfort and confirmation I humbly and ſolemnly declare "That the peaceful and pleaſant ſerenity of mind, the ſecret joys, the ſpiritual, ſubſtantial, and abiding comforts my ſoul has feaſted on this *evening*, whilſt alone converſing with her God, and aſcending to him in the acts

of

of faith and love, are what far ſurpaſs the pompous pleaſures of imperial palaces! or the moſt refined and delicate entertainment, ſet out with all the elegance of art and nature."

Chingford, June 9, 1712.

AND can I walk theſe fields, converſe with theſe perſons, and view yon' rural habitation, without reflecting upon that *bliſsful time*, when I became firſt acquainted with the glorious Jeſus! Can I *take a ſtep*, can I *caſt an eye* towards it, and my heart not leap, and my ſoul not glow within me! had I the thought and utterance of an angel, how little could I diſcover to the world of the wonderful *experiences* which followed upon that great and happy revolution! the glorious riches of divine grace which were then diſplayed, and have ſince been flowing for the ſpace of *ſix years*, deſerve the praiſes of a *Seraph*, and more than *all the harps* of Seraphims can give!

But alas! how ought I to ſink into the moſt profound abaſement, ſorrow and ſhame, for my ingratitude, unprofitableneſs, and ſinful wanderings; the coldneſs of my zeal, the lukewarmneſs of my ſpirit, and conſequent indifference of my affections to the things of God; the weakneſs and interruptions of my *faith, and love, and joy*; and that I have been

ſo

ſo eaſily impreſſed with the *things of time*, and ſo little in the thoughts of the *inviſible things of eternity!* Lord, I pray to be cleanſed and pardoned by the blood of the everlaſting covenant! I pray for a more plentiful effuſion of the ſpirit, and freſh communications of grace, to correct the *diſorders* of my ſoul, and raiſe her powers to a more *heavenly* frame! I thirſt, I pant for a greater conformity to the object of my *ſuperlative love*; more enlargedneſs and unweariedneſs in running his delightful ways! to be enabled to recommend his grace and righteouſneſs *to others*, and to have a greater fitneſs and capacity to ſerve and honour him in the world!

How forcible an inducement ſhould it be with young ones to entertain and welcome *religion*, ſince it forbids us nothing that is really *valuable* and *pleaſant*; allows us all the *comforts* and *bleſſings of life*, in their trueſt enjoyment, and commands nothing but what tends to *ſecure* and *advance* our own happineſs! Happy indeed! are the ſouls who can behold nature in its *gayeſt dreſs*, and *moſt delightful ſcenes*, and look through all the various *beautiful appearances* that adorn the ſurface of the earth, to the fountain and original of them all! that know they may freely partake of the *bounty* of their heavenly father, while the *curſe and ſting* with reſpect to them, is removed from the world by the death of their Redeemer! who contemplate and admire the divine perfections that ſhine in every part of the creation! who obſerve

obſerve with *adoring rapture* the various and wonderful characters of infinite wiſdom, power, and goodneſs, which are impreſſed on every object around them! who take notice of the excellent *beauty* and *uſefulneſs* that is lodged in *that bird*, or *beaſt*, or *plant*, and love it for its author's ſake! are glad to have any views of their divine father, tho' they were to trace him but in the footſteps of *nature*, and behold him in the dark diſguiſe of the *creature!* but the numerous ſtreams of *goodneſs* and *beauty* that ſurround them in this paradiſe below, cannot ſatisfy their *inflamed deſires*, which can alone be quenched in the *ocean* itſelf from whence *thoſe rivulets* flow!

How ſhort and tranſient are all things here! how hungry does my ſoul return from the richeſt feaſts of creature enjoyments, when without the views and preſence of her God! how little can they ſupply the abſence of *him*, who is *all things* in himſelf, and without whoſe favourable ſmiles, not the pleaſures of *a paradiſe*, or the company *of angels*, would be deſirable! communion with him, and the apprehenſion of *his love*, will at any time compenſate for the want of all the *friends* and *comforts* in the world; yea utterly ſwallow up and extinguiſh the very ſenſe and thought of them: but take away *this ſource* of happineſs, and the whole creation becomes *dry*, *deſtitute* and *comfortleſs* to an intellectual creature! every thing but the enjoyment of an *infinite good* deludes the hopes, and ſhames the expectations of a

reaſonable

reaſonable ſpirit, and the choiceſt entertainments, without Chriſt, are but *vexing vanity* to an immortal ſoul. Were there no *higher good* to be hoped for, or enjoyed, than what lies within the compaſs of this world, there would be little cauſe to envy the *dignity* and *happineſs* of the rational nature: ſure I am, ſhould the narrow confines of *this ſinful ſtate* ſet limits to our utmoſt view, ſhould all our thoughts and hopes and proſpects terminate in this miſerable life, the *reaſonable ſpirit* would eternally languiſh in its *natural* and *renewed* capacities; ſtill grope and wander on in endleſs ſearch after *true happineſs*, and *pine* under the everlaſting abſence of its only *proper* and *adequate* good and portion! O vain and tranſitory world! what words are ſufficient to expreſs the felicity of my ſoul, that has ſhaken off thy *heavy* tho' *glittering* chains, and can now chaunt the triumphs of *liberty* and *conqueſt*, tho' once thy wretched and *inſulted* vaſſal! In what ſtrains of gratitude ſhall I ſing ſalvation to a *dying Jeſus*, for *this part* of his endearing purchaſe, *my redemption* from this evil world! I never can too *often*, or too *thankfully* recount my deliverance from ſo vile a thraldom.!

Oh! that I had the pinions of an eagle to outſoar the *vanities* of this life, and haſten upwards to my *eternal reſt*! When ſhall I entertain more appretiating thoughts of heaven and glory? When ſhall the things *eternal* and *unſeen* recover and maintain their *due*

weight

weight with me, and continually poſſeſs my ſoul with a juſt ſenſe of their *awful ſolemnity!* Why am I ſo affected with this *preſent world*; I am born for an happier condition, and am travelling to a better inheritance! Ah! why ſo much thoughtfulneſs and concern about this *ſojourning* ſtate? How is it that the difficulties or delights of the paſſage can ſwallow up the thoughts of ſo *bleſſed an home!* that the occurrences of a *few hours* ſhould drown the apprehenſions of a *vaſt eternity!* There was a time, O my ſoul! when the conſtant expectation of the bridegroom's coming kept thee always watchful: when nothing could baniſh from thy mind the *worth* of the ſoul, the *emptineſs* of the world, and the *nearneſs* of eternity; the idea of the great tribunal, and the ſcene of a general reſurrection! whence then this viſible alteration in thy *preſent frame?* that thou canſt ſit down ſo contentedly with the *outſide* of a duty, without the *ſpiritual* joy, and *internal* glory of it! that thou canſt paſs ſo many Sabbaths and ſermons and ſeaſons of heavenly converſe, without any *ſignal tokens* of the divine preſence! that every *little trifle* and *inconvenience* unſettles and diſcompoſes thy nobleſt powers, whilſt the joys and glories of another world are ſeldom thought on with deſerved regard! what has *cooled* the fervor of thy heavenly breathings, or *checked* my ſoul in her immortal flight? haſt thou ſeen cauſe to reverſe thy judgment, to diſcard thy former apprehenſions, and embrace

a *new*

a *new* and *contrary choice*? is not Chriſt as *precious* and heaven as *glorious*, and ſin as *hateful*, and hell as *dreadful*, death as *certain*, and eternity as *awful*, the ſoul as *dear*, and the world as *deſpicable* as ever? awake! then, O my ſoul, *rouſe! rouſe* up thy ſluggiſh powers! deſpiſe both the *blaſts* and *bubbles* of this world, whilſt the *crown of glory* hangs glittering in thine eye! exert thyſelf in the intereſt of a Redeemer, who loved thee *from eternity*, and *died* for thee *on the* croſs; rear him up ſome monument of his praiſe that ſhall advance his honour above *common trophies*!

O my God, can I think of being honoured with a place in the thoughts of thine *everlaſting love*; can I think of being redeemed from a hell of *ſorrow* and *eternal wailings*! can I think of a *heavenly paradiſe* prepared to receive me in all its glories! of *dwelling* for ever in his *bliſsful arms*! who loved and waſhed me in his dying blood! can hopes and expectations ſo *divinely great*, ſuffer me to be moved with the *comforts* or *afflictions* of this vaniſhing life! Lord, *humble*, *pardon*, and *relieve* me! O increaſe my *faith*, ſupport my *patience*, enliven my *hope*, and keep me *thankful*! Ah! when ſhall I arrive at that ſtate, where nothing ſhall *allay* my joys, *divide* my love, or *interrupt* my praiſe for ever!

Upon opening my *mother's* bible, which I believe had been untouched by any ſince her death,

death, I found theſe four ſcriptures folded down:

John xvii 3, *This is life eternal, to know thee the only true God, and Jeſus Chriſt, whom thou haſt ſent.*

Iſaiah xl. 1, 2, *Comfort ye, comfort ye my people, ſaith your God; ſpeak ye comfortably unto Jeruſalem, and cry unto her, that her warfare is accompliſhed, that her iniquity is pardoned; for ſhe hath received at the Lord's hands double for all her ſins.*

Iſaiah liv. 9. *For this is as the waters of Noah to me; for as I have ſworn that the waters of Noah ſhall no more go over the earth, ſo have I ſworn that I will not be wroth with thee, nor rebuke thee.*

Jer. xxxi. 3, *The Lord hath appeared of old unto me, ſaying, yea I have loved thee with an everlaſting love: therefore with loving kindneſs have I drawn thee.*

And was it thus with my dear relation? then, how may I triumph in the thoughts of a *departed mother*, who, tho' I was not ſenſible of her death, nor then capable of conſidering her everlaſting ſtate, yet ſeems to leave *this* with me, and the reſt of her relations, as ground of unſpeakable conſolation! Oh! what glory do I behold in my mother's *intereſt*, and *propriety* in theſe words! methinks they look like her laſt and dying declaration; as if ſhe had laid *her finger upon the place*, and ſaid, "*This is the faith in which I die; on which I venture my ſoul, my all, to eternity: and theſe are the pro-*

miſes which God has ſealed to me by his ſpirit, and thro' which I ſee he loved me before the foundation of the world."

Happily am I conſtrained to believe, that I ſhall meet my *mother, my moſt affectionate parent*, among them who are ſinging the praiſes of the Lamb in glory, and ſee her ſitting with Abraham, and Iſaac, and Jacob, in the kingdom of God! and how gladly will ſhe behold *me* uſhered into glory, by the Captain of my ſalvation! with what raptures of ſpirit will ſhe hear him pronounce "*Enter into the kingdom*;" and call herſelf happy that ever ſhe was born, to bear *ſuch an object* of redeeming love! when ſhe ſhall underſtand what aſtoniſhing wonders of victorious love have been diſplayed in my *diſtinguiſhed ſalvation.*

Come, O my ſoul, call home all thy *wandering thoughts*, and ſurvey the happineſs of a pardoned ſtate! adore that grace which has brought thee into ſuch an *unſpeakably* bleſſed condition, that thou canſt reflect on *every* thing with a *ſecret tranſport*, and all thy meditations reſolve in triumph!

"*Are thy natural capacities very weak and ſhallow? thine acquired abilities very ſmall and contemptible, ſo that thou art deſpiſed by men of parts and letters?*"

This teaches thee to adore the incomprehenſible depth of divine ſovereignty, that paſſeth over the *learned Gamaliels*, and *profound Ariſtotles*,

Ariſtotles, and reveals his counſels to *babes* and *children*. Reflect with pleaſure that immediately on thy flight into the regions of bleſſedneſs, how great will be the *graſp* of thine underſtanding! the *illumination* of thy mind! the *clearneſs* of thy viſion! the *depth* of thy intuition! the length and breadth of *all thy capacities*, which ſhall be raiſed to the *higheſt poſſibility!* Then ſhalt thou no more complain of a *childiſh* underſtanding, and a *contracted ſpirit*; but with *elevated conceptions*, refined and enlarged, ſhalt be enabled to behold the glorious myſteries of an *unveiled goſpel*, and all the *deep deſigns* of eternity! thou ſhalt be fitted for *angelical* performances, and vie with *Gabriel* in his nobleſt ſervices!

"*Doſt thou look upon any deformity and defect of body, and art thou apt ſometimes to envy the ſtrength and beauty with which thy Creator has adorned and graced the perſons of ſome others?*"

Remember *thy body* cannot be *now* ſo debaſed, as it ſhall be *hereafter* ennobled; nor ſo inglorioufly *mean*, as it ſhall be exquiſitely *beautiful!* O the roſy bluſhes of that ſacred morn! *morning* of eternal day! welcome beams of the Sun of righteouſneſs, which ſhall viſit its *long benighted tomb*, and call it forth to go with *thee*, the partner of its bliſs, into everlaſting glory! O faireſt morning of the reſurrection! when youth perpetual, and immortal vigour ſhall clothe *this body* all anew, and deck it with a thouſand recommending excellencies! *feature* and *ſtature*, the *livelieſt activity*, and *matchleſs*

proportion, ſhall all conſpire to perfect the beauty of this *heavenly ſtructure!*

"*Art thou overlooked with diſdain by the great ones of this world, and vouchſafed from them no other ſmiles than thoſe of contempt?*"

Comfort thyſelf with this, that thy *extraction* is no other than *divine*, thy *deſcent* no lower than *heaven*! all the *royal greatneſs* of any *earthly ſtem*, is nothing, compared with this exalted birth! What is the blaze of *imperial dignity*, to the being *a ſon of God* and *heir of glory!* the *angels* will receive thee with joy into their auguſt ſociety, and diſdain not *at preſent* to become thy *guardians!* the whole triumphant church of glorified ſaints, with their palms in their hands, and their crowns on their heads, *invite* thee, with all affection, into their *intimate communion*, and would welcome thee with ſhouts to their everlaſting manſions! thus honourably art thou allied, by thine eſpouſals, to Jeſus! theſe are thy relations *by the ſide* of the Redeemer, the leaſt of which is endued with ſuch excellent glory, as would *obſcure the ſun* in his meridian ſplendour!

"*Thou haſt but little of the wealth of the world, and cannot pretend to any large poſſeſſions here.*"

Yet, thou haſt as *much* as thy heavenly Father ſees beſt for thee to have: were it for thy *good* he would not withhold from thee the riches of *both the Indies*; and as thou art *poſſeſſed* of the Lord of heaven and earth, thou haſt a right to all that is contained in the whole *com-*

paſs

paſs of nature, and that in a far more *appropriating* ſenſe than the moſt magnificent worldling could ever boaſt of; beſides *innumerable* glories and *incorruptible* treaſures that await thee above in the heavenly kingdom, which the earthly *Cæſars* never dreamt of.

"*Sweetneſs of natural temper, affable diſpoſitions, and engaging deportments, are beautiful flowers which often grow even in nature's garden; the want of which is apt to throw thee out of man's eſteem, and render thee very mean and undeſired in the world.*"

This leads thee again to admire the ſovereignty of *divine proceedings*, which have paſſed by thouſands of more *eligible tempers*, and *agreeable diſpoſitions*, and choſen thee to be a monument of *peculiar* grace; and at death thou ſhalt be diveſted of whatever is *unpleaſing* and *diſagreeable* in converſe, and ſhalt put on all thoſe *endearing* and acceptable qualifications, which will fit thee for the nobleſt and beſt ſociety.

"*Art thou groaning under a body of death, rent and mangled by Satan's temptations, inceſſantly grappling in the ſoreſt conflicts with thy own corruptions?*"

This is indeed the *bittereſt drug* in the believer's potion, and chief ground of *Chriſtian ſorrow*; were it not for this, my ſoul would anticipate her bleſſedneſs *immediately*, and commence her *heaven* even in this *vale of tears!* but oh! 'tis this that makes me mourn like a *dove of the valley*, and ſigh, even to the *break-*

ing of the loins. Diſhonouring the Redeemer, grieving the Spirit, expoſing the goſpel, cauſing the enemies of grace to blaſpheme, making men queſtion the reality of religion, and neglect the pleaſures they do not believe, is matter of ſad lamentation and complaint, and deſerves to be deplored with *tears of blood.*

But the day, the joyful day is haſtening! behold it comes, even as on the wings of the wind! when *ſighing* and *weeping* ſhall for ever flee away, and *all occaſions* of mourning have an eternal remove! *then*, thou ſhalt no more be tempted to do any thing unworthy thy *holy profeſſion!* they that now watch for thy halting, and are ready to upbraid thee with every *ſlip* and failure, ſhall then be put to ſhame, and for ever ſilenced; ſhall ſee thee ſhining in *perfect holineſs*, whom once they could condemn for an *affected hypocrite!* then ſhall they underſtand that the imperfections of the ſaints were no ſufficient plea for *their own* wilful continuance in ſin: and however they take *encouragement* from the falls and miſcarriages *of a profeſſor*, to harden themſelves in their deſperate courſes, they ſhall then appear without excuſe, inaſmuch as they ſtill tranſgreſſed againſt their *own light*, and the *ſtings* and *interdicts* of an accuſing conſcience. Such perſons bring ſwift deſtruction upon themſelves, whoſe damnation, *even already*, ſlumbereth not, and *that grace* which is now, it may be, by ſome *ſuſpected*, becauſe concealed and reſerved,

ſerved, and too much confined to the *breaſt* and *retirement*, ſhall then ſit victorious and triumphant on the brow, conſpicuous to *a ſurrounding world*.

—That joyful morn, my ſoul, will be dawning ere long, when thou ſhalt be preſented before the throne of the majeſty of heaven, without *ſpot* or *wrinkle*, or *any ſuch thing*: thou canſt *now* take up Paul's victorious ſong, and *thank God, thro' Jeſus Chriſt thy Lord*, but the hour is coming when *ſin* ſhall for ever relinquiſh the throne, and grieve thee no more to eternity. O! this perfection, this everlaſting freedom from *moral impurity*, now overflows my ſoul with the *pureſt pleaſure*, and raptures it with the *higheſt delight!* this is the very *quinteſſence* of all heavenly bliſs! the ſweeteſt pleaſure in the joys of eternity! and the utmoſt point of *human felicity!*

Thus might I run over the whole compaſs of things, and reflect with joy upon every condition!

Is not this a *bleſſed ſtate?* can pearls and diadems, crowns and kingdoms come in competition with this? can heaven and earth be a rival here? is there any thing *in nature* to vie with ſuch a ſtate, to match this felicity? Who would not long to be in ſuch a caſe? and *to whom* now doſt thou, my ſoul, owe this bleſſedneſs? what *bountiful hand*, what *heart of love* has made thee ſo happy a creature? was it always with *thee* thus? or is this the portion of *all?* what amazing grace has made the diſtinction?

tinction? Oh! that *thou* ſhouldeſt be born to *ſuch joys!* Bleſſed God! what tongue is able to expreſs *due gratitude* for ſuch diſcriminating and inconceivable goodneſs! tell me, O ye angels and glorified ſaints, tell me how I ſhall make ſome ſuitable return! help me to pay that *debt of love* I owe to my great benefactor! Come, thou BLESSED SPIRIT, who haſt made me a partaker of ſuch aſtoniſhing grace, come, and form me to ſhew forth thy praiſe! come, warm my frozen heart, and raiſe my feeble notes to a *diviner pitch*! but alas! how unſuitable are my *praiſes* to thine *infinite* mercies! how ill do they become thine unfathomable love! I *bluſh* and *am aſhamed* at my own acclamations! I will rather, therefore, confeſs *that* by a *ſilent adoration*,* than detract from its glory by attempting to expreſs what is *unutterable*, by the united endeavours of all human and *ſeraphic tongues*!

Sept. 2, 1714

THRO' *vaſt afflictions*, and *amazing woes*! thro' *terrible* and *prodigious ſtorms*! my ſoul

* The beautiful thought here introduced, bears a ſtriking reſemblance to that *celebrated cloſe*, which Mr. Thomſon puts to his *Hymn* dedicated to the Author of *nature*, and the *ſeaſons* he has been deſcribing;

"Come then, *expreſſive ſilence*, muſe his praiſe!"

It may be obſerved that the manuſcript of the above was written many years before Mr. Thomſon publiſhed his Seaſons, he being at that time but a boy of 12 years old.

ſoul is ſtruggling to the *heavenly ſhore*! over *fiery billows*, and the backs of moſt *furious temptations*, am I walking to my Jeſus! But in the midſt of all my agonies and conflicts there is ſecretly lodged in my ſoul, a firm and unbroken hope of glory, which is ready to break forth into triumphant ſhouts, at the firſt approach of a *Redeemer*! O then the joys that will overflow my ſoul! what tides of glory will run to my heart in that hour!

Nov. 30, 1714.

THIS night I read over the ſtory of *Joſeph* and his *brethren*; when I had finiſhed it, with what ardent affection did I think upon my dear Lord Jeſus! and contemplate with *tears* and *rapture*, how infinitely ſuperior to the tenderneſs of *Joſeph* was his love to me, when he hung upon the croſs! how was I affected when I thought that his bowels yearned more tenderly and exquiſitely over me under my *ſpiritual afflictions* and *agonies*, than *Joſeph's* did when he wept ſo affectionately upon the necks of his brethren! how was I elevated with the aſſurance, that however he might *look ſtrange* upon me, and *deal roughly* with me for awhile, and conceal the workings of his heart from me, for my trial and correction; yet he will one day embrace me with a more endearing regard, than *Joſeph* did his beloved Benjamin! Had

Had I time now to *reflect*, how large and pleaſant a meditation would riſe out of this happy moment, this gracious viſit of the kind Redeemer, and many others of a like nature, which (thro' my preſent overbearing temptations) I am forced either abruptly to break off, or to paſs over in *ſilent admiration*.

December, 1715.

GLORIOUS and tremendous Jehovah! at *whoſe preſence* the mountains flow down, the rocks are rent, and the everlaſting hills do bow, the ſun ſtands abaſhed, and the moon aſtoniſhed! who ſitteth upon the circle of the earth, and the inhabitants thereof are as graſshoppers! that ſtretcheſt out the heavens as a curtain, and meaſureſt the ocean in thine hand, and haſt hung the earth upon nothing! who art clothed with majeſty as with a garment! that dwelleſt amid the praiſes of the Seraphim, and at the ſplendour of whoſe moſt glorious throne, they vail their faces and cover their feet! thouſands of thouſands miniſter unto thee! and ten thouſand times ten thouſand, ſtand before thee! Thou telleſt the number of the ſtars, and calleſt them all by their names, thro' the greatneſs of thy might not one faileth! Thou great and univerſal Sovereign, King eternal, immortal, inviſible; who ruleſt in *heaven*, and over all the kingdoms

doms of this world; that influenceſt the *whole frame of nature*, and guideſt all the *motions of providence*! Thou putteſt no truſt in thy ſervants, and chargeſt thine angels with folly; thou bringeſt the princes to nothing, and makeſt the judges of the earth as vanity! thou reſpecteſt not the wiſe of heart, but wilt abaſe the lofty and the proud, and dwell with the humble and the contrite one!

Thou God of the ſpirits of all fleſh, to whom belong the iſſues from death; whoſe eyes behold, and whoſe eyelids try the children of men! at whoſe bar all the *nations of the world*, and all the *legions of hell* ſhall ſtand! whoſe *abſolute pleaſure*, and *almighty hands*, graſp the eternal condition of thy creatures! Thy *juſtice*, who ſhall dare to impeach! thy *ſentence*, what power can reverſe! and from thy *tribunal* there is no appeal for ever!

O Lord, my God! my heavenly Father! of whoſe glorious majeſty and terrible excellencies, this is but a faint deſcription: thou ſeeſt that with *humble fear*, and an *adoring proſtration* of mind; with a deep and afflicting apprehenſion of my exceeding vileneſs; with a *thankful admiration* of thy rich and moſt undeſerved grace; and to the *glory* and *honour* of thy name, I make this profeſſion of my faith and hope in thy covenant mercy, thro' Jeſus Chriſt!

Thou knoweſt, O my God, 'tis from no vain elation of mind, preſumptuous arrogance and ſelf conceit, or deſire of the *applauſe of creatures*

creatures like myſelf, whoſe breath is in their noſtrils, that I make this declaration of my confidence in thee! I am happy in the conſciouſneſs of *my relation* to thee, and that *thou alloweſt* the ground of my hope, and the juſtneſs of my triumphs, whether others are *informed* of them, and *believe* them, or no; therefore, with the *greateſt abaſement* of ſoul, *ſelf-diffidence*, and *ſelf-abhorrence*, I expreſs my *joyful aſſurance* of thine unchangeable love, in the midſt of all thoſe horrors which encompaſs me.

I KNOW then that the bleſſed Spirit has accompliſhed that *union* between Chriſt and my ſoul, which all the powers of earth and hell ſhall never be able to diſſolve! I know he has effected a *ſaving change* (and let that day be for ever ſung) in all the faculties of my mind; and hath bleſſed me with the honour and happineſs of a new creation! and by this I know (more aſſuredly than if an angel had told me) that I have a ſpecial intereſt in all the benefits of *redeeming love!* that the Lord Jeſus covenanted with his Father, came down from heaven, put on human nature, obeyed, ſuffered, died, roſe again, and is now interceding at the throne above, *for ME!* and that my *worthleſs name* was given in to Chriſt by the Father, as one of thoſe *many ſons* he undertook the charge of conducting to glory, in his eternal counſels and reſolves for the happineſs of his choſen! ſo that I have the *fulneſs of heaven*, the *riches of the Deity* to go to, and all his infinite

infinite perfections are *mine*, as far as they can poſſibly be diſplayed for my *felicity* and *ſecurity*; and their *goodneſs* and *glory* can be embraced by my finite capacities! I ſee there is a *natural* and *invincible* tendency in a pardoned and renewed ſtate, towards the bleſſedneſs of heaven, and an *inſeparable* connection between my *preſent experiences* and *eternal glory*! I know that neither *death* nor *life*; not all the *anguiſh* and *diſtreſs* I *now* feel, nor all that terror and darkneſs I am *yet* to converſe with, can ſeparate me from the love of Chriſt, or impeach any one of the divine perfections, as acting *repugnant* to the tenor of his gracious covenant.

If, in correction for my ſin, and to purge me from my droſs and corruption, the Lord ſhould ſuffer me to be thrown out of the *thoughts of men* with indignation and diſdain; if that affection that is natural to the hearts of *relations* ſhould die, and a fixed *eſtrangement* and *averſion* prevail in the room of it, ſo that I ſhould be cut off from the *comfort of their ſociety*, and all the pleaſure of mutual intercourſe, of kindneſs expire; yea, if I were thruſt from the embraces and eſteem, even of *wiſe* and *good men*; nay, ſevered from the *communion* of the viſible church, driven from the face of mankind into the wildeſt deſert, *there* be buffetted by Satan, conflict with the horrors of ſuch a ſtate, and at laſt, *die without a witneſs*; it cannot touch the *life*, or extinguiſh the hopes of the new creature; it cannot wreſt me from the arms of that *mighty love* which embraced

me in its counſels from eternity! but I ſhould then be carried by angels to that heavenly manſion which is prepared for me! How *mean* and *inglorious* ſoever I now ſeem, I know I ſhall not be *aſhamed* at that day when the whole *rational world* ſhall be gathered into one general aſſembly, and *heaven*, *earth*, and *hell* make their united appearance; then ſhall I *glitter* in my Redeemer's train, and be a *ſparkling jewel* in his glorious crown! when many that now make *conſiderable figures* in the world, and ſhine with all the advantages of *nature*, *art*, and *condition*, ſhall wiſh to be *for ever hid* from the face of their judge! If I am now *abaſhed* at the preſence of mortals, I know I ſhall behold the great Rector of the world, and not be *confounded*: when I receive the moſt *opprobrious* and *diſdainful treatment* from any of my fellow creatures, I know that I am in a ſtate of friendſhip with their *Maker*, and can at all times fly to the boſom of him who formed them! and I deem myſelf happy in the ſmiles and approbation of the Almighty, tho' all his creatures were armed againſt me! I ſee an infinite diſproportion between the nobleſt *works of his hand*, and his own *glorious ſelf!* and that all the angels in heaven, and all the glories of this lower world, are but a *ray* from that *ſun*, a *drop* from that *ocean* of goodneſs and beauty! I may look upon a *frowning univerſe* with *indifference*, yea, with *triumph*, whilſt I am ſure of being embraced with the compaſſions of a father, by its auguſt Creator.

And when my ſoul ſhall paſs out of this ſtate of mortality, and get above all the *calumnies* and *reflections* of the world, and all the *charges* and *aſſaults* of infernal powers, ſhe ſhall, in a little time, return to confront her adverſaries at the *divine tribunal*: and wherein ſhe was *culpable* ſhe ſhall be abſolved by her judge; wherein ſhe was *innocent* ſhe ſhall be avenged by her Redeemer!

I know that all the afflictions I here meet with, how *ſtrange* and *aſtoniſhing* ſoever, are dealt out to me by the hands of him that died for me: and that nothing ſhall befall me in all my paſſage through this world, but what is directed by *infinite wiſdom*, and is conſiſtent with everlaſting love. I put all the providences I have ever met with, into the hand of my dear Redeemer, to be managed by his divine wiſdom, to the glory of my heavenly Father: and how dark and awful ſoever ſome may ſeem, I know there is no *wrath*, no *curſe*, in any of his diſpenſations towards me; but 'tis my boundleſs joy, that the *very worſt* I meet with in this mortal ſtate, ſhall work for my *eternal good*, purſuant to the grace of an everlaſting covenant: yea, that thoſe very trials which are ſo ſhocking and diſtreſſing to nature, proceed from his *diſtinguiſhing love*, and I firmly believe that they are ſent with no other deſign, than to promote *my happineſs*, by a *conformity* to his holineſs. I know that all my preſent *groans* and *agonies*, ſhall *heighten* the pleaſures of an eternal life: and though much of what

I now endure, may not be immediately *for the sake*, nor *apparently* for the *honour* of my Lord; yet through the divine eſtabliſhment, it ſhall certainly add to the glory of my *immortal crown*; when the *tempeſt* ſhall be changed into a *calm*, and this *cloudy region* into a *pleaſant ſky*! then ſhall I drink the *deeper* of eternal joys, and have a more *exquiſite reliſh* of the pleaſures of the upper world, for all the overwhelming ſorrows I now endure! of this I am confident, that he who has begun a *good work* in me, will perfect it to the day of Chriſt; and that I ſhall be preſented *faultleſs* before the preſence of his glory with exceeding joy. My *converſion* has already cauſed a gladneſs amongſt the angels of God! they have celebrated my eſpouſals to Jeſus, and have ſung the wonders of that grace which ſeized me on the brink of everlaſting woe, when I was as one *free among the dead*, and called me to the hope of an eternal kingdom! and they will guard me with triumphant joy to my *happy coronation* in glory! Though now I am fed with the *bread of affliction*, and the *wine of aſtoniſhment*, and have a *cup of trembling* put into my hands; yet my friend and father will preſently wipe away the tears from my eyes; feaſt me with every *perfection* of his nature; break up the *deeps*, and unlock the *treaſures* of his immeaſurable goodneſs, and eternal reſolves, and explain all the *knotty myſteries*, and *intricate methods* of his providential proceedings! *even now* faith aſſures me, that

that his infinite mind ſees far beyond all created reach! that he can diſconcert the deepeſt and moſt deſtructive projects and ſtratagems of hell, and make thoſe things, which to a natural underſtanding ſeem to have the *moſt contrary tendency*, to iſſue in his *higheſt glory*, and my *greateſt ſpiritual advantage*.

With God nothing is impoſſible! he can cauſe the preſent *gloomy ſtate* of things to introduce a more *pleaſing ſcene*: he can convey thoſe *influences* to my inmoſt ſoul as ſhall fill me with *joys unſpeakable*! He can draw aſide the *curtain of ſenſe*, rend the *veil of eternity*, and lead me by his ſpirit into the glories of the inviſible world, and give me the moſt raviſhing apprehenſions of what I ſhall *be* and *enjoy* for ever!

I know 'tis neither from a deficiency in *power* nor *love*, that I am not immediately reſcued out of all my diſtreſſes and temptations: not in *power*, for he has formed the univerſe, and ſuſtains by his word the whole frame of nature! not in *love*, for he has provided heaven for me, and will one day receive me to all its glories! it is becauſe *ſo it ſeemeth good in his ſight*. The eternal God will have mortals to know, that though the *uſual methods* of his conduct are ſuch as may be accounted for by a *ſanctified* underſtanding, yet ſometimes he will walk in thoſe paths, and take ſuch *heights and and depths* in his proceedings, that he will be *adored* and not *comprehended*. If a *mortal monarch*, who ſo lately terrified his neighbours,

and ſhook all Europe (tho' now inſulted by *duſt* and *worms*), when demanded the cauſe of his unjuſt invaſion of their dominions, returned no other but this haughty reply, FOR MY OWN GLORY! ſhall not the *univerſal Sovereign*, ſole arbiter of the univerſe, erect ſome trophies for the GLORY of his grace, of which no account ſhall be for ever given, but *his own good pleaſure*? and 'tis with holy aſtoniſhment, that I ſee *myſelf* in the embraces of his divine love, who have neither *wiſdom*, *learning*, *greatneſs*, nor any one circumſtance to recommend me to the world, but very much to *leſſen* and *abaſe* me: when I have cauſe to fear that many, who have all that the world calls *great* and *good*, ſhall at laſt be turned into hell, and dwell with everlaſting burnings!

Why art thou caſt down then, O my ſoul! and why art thou thus diſquieted within me? why do thoughts ariſe in my heart, ſuch tumultuous and ungovernable cogitations, that my very countenance is changed with ſadneſs and trouble? Is this conſiſtent with that holy triumph thou haſt been expreſſing? how canſt thou be ſo diſconſolate with a *pardon in hand* and *glory in view*! alas! it is becauſe I cannot exemplify what I feel in my ſoul, in a *ſteady courſe* of action and ſervice, to the divine honour and ſpiritual advantage of others! To *will* is preſent, but how to *perform* that which is ſpiritually good, in a manner that is ornamental to religion, eſpecially in the preſence of others, I find not.

" O then,

"O then, my God! what will thou do for thy great name? hast thou done such wonders for my soul, and made me such a monument of distinguishing grace, and shall the powers of hell, or my own ingratitude rob thee of thy praise! wilt thou *lose* the honour of thy *electing*, *redeeming*, and *renewing* love! For thine own sake, even for thine own sake, for thy name and thy praise, appear, O my God!

"Mine iniquities testify against me, my soul has wandered far from thee, and forgotten the *great things* thou hast done for me! I have not returned thee according to that *kindness* and *mercy* thou hast shewn me; but I have been *disingenuous*, and dealt very *treacherously* with thee! I am less than the least of all thy mercies, and unworthy to be numbered with thy children! I ought to have lived like an angel, and have praised thee like a seraphim; whereas I have hardly brought thee the *usual glory* and *service* of a converted creature. Small is the return of duty and praise thou hast received from me, for all the advantages thou hast bestowed: what through the unhappiness of my *natural temper*, a shattered *constitution* of body, and the violence of Satan's temptations, 'tis well if the *glory* thou hast received on my account, will overbalance the *dishonour* I have brought thee.

"I acknowledge, O my God! with shame and confusion, I have not filled up my place and station in *thine house*, with that *usefulness and strictness* I ought to have done! I have not

expressed

expressed that *affection*, *sympathy*, and *concern* which is peculiarly due to such as stand related to me in the fellowship of the gospel, nor been helpful to them in the furtherance of their knowledge, faith, and joy, as might justly be expected from one whom thou hast favoured with such *uncommon experiences!*

"I confess, Lord, with unfeigned grief and sorrow, I have not behaved with that holy, humble, prudent, and winning deportment, in my converse with my *relations* and *friends*, as to make them entertain the most amiable ideas of religion for my sake!

"I have not acted in the *affairs and business of this world* with that *wisdom, cheerfulness, and vigour, meekness*, and *circumspection*, as would have recommended thy ways even to the *ignorant* and the *prejudiced*, and won a testimony to religion from those who are neither its *professors* nor its *friends*. Too, too often have I acted beneath the dignity of my Christian character, the hopes of my divine birth, and unworthy my *relation* to the greatest and the best of beings. I have been too little conversant with thy blessed word; too little affected with the beauty, majesty, grace, veracity and importance of that revelation thou hast made of thy nature and will in the Sacred Scriptures; and whilst I have been delighted with the writings of thy servants, have too much neglected *thine own oracles*, the fountain of all divine truth!

"I have not, O my God! been suitably humbled

bled for the sinfulness of my *unregenerate days*, nor justly sensible of the infinite kindness and endearments of *converting grace*! never have I yet thought upon *redeeming love*, with that gratitude and admiration it deserves; no *public ordinances*, no *private duties*, have been filled up with that lively exercise of grace which should always abound in my pardoned soul: my progress in religion and advances in grace, have, in no wise, been answerable to the *uncommon greatness* of my spiritual beginnings; and in all my duty and obedience to thee, I have been too little under the constraints of divine love. I have not duly improved my *spiritual privileges*, nor justly valued my *temporal enjoyments*: I have not considered as I ought, that consistency there may be in the *affairs of time*, with the *pursuits of religion*; and under the apprehension of approaching eternity, I have been too apt to forget the concern I have in the present world; that there are many duties incumbent on me *peculiar* to this imperfect state, and that thy glory and honour is not a little engaged in my discharge of *relative obligations*, and conduct in *secular affairs*! I have too much conformed to the vain and empty fashions of this world, and from bashfulness and fear, have too often complied with the will of man, to the displeasing of my God! too much have I been moved with the censures and opinions of fellow-worms; of a man that shall die, and of the son of man, that shall be as grass, and have

forgotten

forgotten the Lord my Maker, who laid the foundations of the earth!

I confess, O God! that I have not acquitted myself in my *spiritual warfare*, to the honour of the Captain of my salvation, and worthy so glorious a leader! I have not borne my afflictions and temptations with that patience and resignation, that equanimity and cheerfulness of spirit, that sense of thy fatherly displeasure, and childlike sorrow for the miscarriages that occasioned it, as might justly have been expected from me! and though my trials have been both exquisite in their kind, and long in their continuance, yet that lively *hope of immortality* which thou hast given me, beyond thousands of thy people, should have animated me to a more steady and becoming behaviour! Thro' the subtility and prevalence of unbelief, I have been insensibly led into *partial declensions* and *gradual departures* from thee; and have been sinking in my esteem of spiritual and divine objects; I have forgotten that 'tis the glory of my soul to be a *thorough follower* of the Lamb, even though in some instances, it should render me contemptible in the eyes of the world. With tears I would confess and bewail it before my God, that I have lost much of that savour and relish of divine things which once I had!

"Righteous art thou, O Lord! in putting a cup of bitterness into my hands, and driving that soul home by *thy terrors*, that could slight the drawings of thy love! 'tis fit thou shouldest

ſhouldeſt vindicate the honours of thy perfections from thoſe *aſperſions* and *miſrepreſentations* they may have received through the miſcarriages of a fooliſh and undutiful child: I have been too *timerous* in appearing for thy righteous cauſe, too backward and unwilling to endure reproach for Chriſt and his ways; and he may juſtly leave me to that *ſcorn* and *contempt* which is deſtitute of that hidden comfort and glory, that accompanies the ſuffering for his ſake, and be aſhamed of a *ſoul* that has been ſo often aſhamed of HIM! I acknowledge my ſin, Oh God, I ſee my vileneſs and ingratitude! I put my mouth in the duſt, ſhame and confuſion cover me! I kiſs that rod in the hand of a *Father* which might have been the *vengeance* of an ireful judge, and plead guilty to all the indictments for which I ſtand arraigned at thy bar! I was ſhapen in iniquity, and in ſin did my mother conceive me, and I have been a tranſgreſſor from the womb! Thou art juſtified when thou ſpeakeſt, thou art clear when thou judgeſt; and any ſuffering on this ſide hell is leſs than mine iniquities have deſerved! but, O my God! rebuke me not in thine anger, neither chaſten me in thy hot diſpleaſure! remember my frame, that I am but duſt, and do not plead with me in all thy terrors! O conſider my affliction and my pain, and forgive my ſin! Behold, Lord, how I am hunted like a partridge upon the mountains, and buffetted by the powers of darkneſs! the ſor-

rows

rows of death have compaſſed me about, and the pains of hell have entered into my ſoul! deep calleth unto deep, thy waves and thy billows go over me; I am full of *confuſion* and *bitterneſs*, my *tears* and *groans* in ſecret are without number! I pour out my ſoul in me continually, I am gone like the ſhadow when it declineth; I am afflicted and ready to die, I am even diſtracted with terrors! the waters are come into my ſoul, I ſink in deep mire where there is no ſtanding! the troubles of my heart are enlarged, my ſoul is grieved, and my ſpirit is overwhelmed within me, becauſe of the *reproach* of thy ways, and *diſhonour* of thy name! Thou haſt delivered my ſoul from eternal death, wilt thou not deliver my feet from falling, that I may live and die to the glory of thy grace! Lord, all my deſire is before thee, and my ſighing is not hid from thee! Oh! that thou wouldeſt rend the heavens and come down, make bare thine everlaſting arm, and, jealous for thine honour, plead *mine afflicted cauſe*! Why withdraweſt thou thy hand, even thy right hand? Lord, pluck it out of thy boſom! Oh, remember that the enemy hath *reproached*, and the fooliſh people have *blaſphemed* thy name! Look down from heaven, and behold from the habitation of thy holineſs and thy glory, where is thy zeal and thy ſtrength, the ſounding of thy bowels, and thy mercies towards me, are they reſtrained? Let the ſighing of the priſoner come before thee, according to the greatneſs

of

of thy power! ſhew me ſome token for good; that they that hate me may ſee it! When thou haſt ſecured the glory of thy holineſs, and vindicated the honour of thy righteous ways, convince the world, O Lord! that thy *mercy* is dear to thee as thy *juſtice*, that thou haſt abundance of compaſſions for thy *returning children*, and that thy bowels are infinite!

"I had fainted, unleſs I had believed; Oh, my God! I truſt in thee, let me not be confounded, let not mine enemies triumph over me.

"Though thou haſt ſhewn me great and ſore troubles, plunged me in the depths of adverſity, and exerciſed me by *terrible providences*; though thou haſt a long time been writing *bitter things* againſt me, yet thou canſt quicken me again, and lead me into pleaſant paſtures, and to refreſhing ſtreams! Let my *ſore temptations* and *exceeding unworthineſs* only render the Lord Jeſus the more precious and honourable to myſelf and others! let the excellency of his perſon, the value of his blood, the perfection of his righteouſneſs, and the prevalence of his interceſſion, all ſhine forth in my pardon and comfort! Return, O Holy Spirit! with thine enlivening preſence, comforting influences, and ſanctifying operations, that *obedience* may become eaſy and pleaſant to me, as formerly, and my *duty*, my delight! cauſe my ſoul to hear the voice of joy and gladneſs; then ſhall the righteous compaſs me about with ſongs of deliverance!

"Thou knoweſt, O God! that though I am

ſurrounded by many *infirmities*, I am no *hypocrite*; that I embrace *religion for itſelf*, though I am ſo ſmall an ornament to its *profeſſion*, and that I am concerned to approve myſelf to thee alone in all my *religious performances*; and I have many tokens to ſhew of thy good will towards me, which thou wilt not *diſavow*; many pledges of my intereſt in thee, which thou wilt not *diſclaim*! I therefore hope for all the *bleſſings* of thy covenant, humbly plead all the *promiſes* of thy word, and ſincerely rejoice in every *perfection* of thy nature! Many a time haſt thou hearkened to the voice of my prayer; according then to the riches of thy ſovereign grace, for the glory of thy name, and the comfort of thy people, command for me a glorious ſalvation! I beg that *thy own glory* may be the ſtandard of all thy proceedings towards me, as it is the *rule* and *meaſure* of my prayer! that praiſe which thou receiveſt from all the works of *creation*, that glory which reſults to thee from every part of this vaſt *frame of nature*, is as nothing in thine account, compared with the glory of thy grace and mercy in Chriſt towards thy choſen! upon this has thine heart been ſet from eternity, and herein doſt thou reſt with infinite complacency, as being the brighteſt diſplay of thy perfections, and fulleſt diſcovery of thine *eſſential glory*! for the ſake, Lord, of *this glory* which thou accounteſt thy choiceſt treaſure, reſtore me mightily, and ſave me! Ten thouſand ſalvations are ever in thine hand, and

thou

thou canſt convey them by ten thouſand different ways, and all of them quite out of the road of my *thought and expectations!* 'tis the glory of thy nature to be as *good* as thou art *great*; and *then* to miniſter thy conſolations to the ſoul, when all created ſprings are dried up, and every refuge fails her. Dear Lord! increaſe my faith! how I pant to break forth out of the priſon of my temptations, to honour thee before thouſands of the people! but oh! theſe gates of braſs, and bars of iron, theſe mountains of difficulty and oppoſition that lie in the way! Forget not any one of all thoſe agonies I have endured, and thoſe aſſaults in which I have been foiled to thy diſhonour, till thou haſt avenged me on my ſpiritual adverſaries, and built thy glory upon their ruins! I am unworthy, and can ſay nothing for myſelf; but I am thy *child*, and the object of *thy favour*! I have a *Jeſus* whom thou haſt given me, to preſent to thee with the arms of my faith, in whoſe ſacrifice thou ſmelleſt an infinite fragrance, and whoſe mediation thou acceppteſt with infinite ſatisfaction; whoſe very *appearance* at thy throne, as thy peoples' advocate, the fulfiller of all righteouſneſs, and one who has magnified thy perfections to the uttermoſt, is more honourable and pleaſing to thee, than all the ſervices of the *ſaints on earth*, and the praiſes of angels in heaven!

"I pray, Father, to be ſaved from my *preſent trials*, in a way that ſhall bring honour to *thy name*, as manifeſted and magnified in

Chriſt! I pray to be ſaved in a way that ſhall preſerve honourable all the ordinances and inſtitutions of thy houſe, put a glory upon thine own appointments, and encourage thy faithful miniſters in their work: in a way that ſhall excite thy people to keep cloſe to thee in a *courſe* of fruitful obedience, and animate them to a *patient waiting* for thee under the *ſharpeſt exerciſes*, and *longeſt trials*: in a way that ſhall manifeſt *my caſe* to be different from that of *hypocrites* and *apoſtates*: put a clear diſtinction between the *ſevereſt chaſtiſements* of thy children, and that *vindictive fury* which thou wilt pour out upon the impenitent and ungodly; and inſtruct both the world and thy own people not to be *raſh and haſty* in their concluſions reſpecting any of thy diſpenſations, but wait to ſee the cloſe and iſſue of thy providences. Let me be ſaved in a way that ſhall leave an awful impreſſion of *Religion* on the minds of men: faſten *irreſiſtible conviction* on their ſouls of its eternal *excellency* and infinite *concernment*, and ſpread a *pleaſant ſavour* and *high reputation* of Chriſt and his ways in the world!

"I beg, if it is conſiſtent with thine infinite ſovereignty, O merciful Father! that *every one* of my *dear relations* may be embraced in the arms of thy covenant love, and be ſavingly converted: that they may *live*, in a true and exalted ſenſe, to thine honour in this world, ſhare with me in my preſent experiences of thy mercy, and be my companions in the joys of eternity! may ſalvation, *eternal ſalvation*,

be the lot and portion of them all! O remember *this petition* for them, when my flesh shall be silent in the grave! and let them reap the everlasting benefit of *thy gracious answer*, however they may entertain my memory! all the interest I have in thee, O my God! that free access which thou graciously allowest me to thy throne, I now humbly use, and would improve for *their sakes!*

"With the greatest sincerity, and from my inmost soul, *I forgive*, Lord, all the indignities that have by any been offered to *my person*, and all the injury they have done to *my reputation*, separate from thy glory, and so far as it is in my power to pardon; and that from the most affectionate remembrance, *that thou for Christ's sake hast forgiven me*: and wherein thine honour has been concerned, and thou hast interested thyself in the quarrel, I beg that *thou* wouldest forgive them for the sake of the great Propitiation!

"Those that have been *charitable*, *patient*, and *tender* towards me during my temptations, that have *prayed* for me in secret, and endeavoured not to aggravate my sorrows, but have borne with my weaknesses with a Christian sympathy and compassion; Lord, remember them when they come into *an hour of temptation*, and let thy bowels yearn towards them! let the comforts of thy covenant be dispensed to them, and uphold them with thine everlasting arms!

"May these my *fervent supplications* be

perfumed with the incenſe of Chriſt's ſacrifice, and made prevalent with thee, O Father, alone through his *powerful mediation!*"

Come, Holy Spirit, breathe upon my ſoul, and let my heart diſſolve in *love* and *praiſe!* I honour thee in the whole of my religion, as all my ſtrength for duty, and all my hope for comfort! not with the labour of the *lip* or *pen*, but with an inward fervour of mind, let me begin thoſe praiſes which will furniſh my happy and eternal employ!

I adore thee; O Father, Son, and Spirit! ſupremely for THYSELF! for the infinite perfections and eſſential glory of thy nature! thou, O my God! art abſolutely *perfect*, incomprehenſibly *great*, and ſuperlatively *good*! the great *author* and *end* of all things! all the faireſt proſpects and moſt magnificent ſcenes which lie within the compaſs of nature, and can poſſibly open to a mortal's view, are but the *ſhadow* of thy perfections, the *ſkirts* of thy glory, and the *footſtool* of thy throne! 'tis thus I remember and adore thee with the higheſt ſatisfaction and delight; and I exult to think that I ſhall *for ever* do ſo, when I ſhall better underſtand thine excellencies and have fuller apprehenſions and clearer views of all the glorious properties of thy nature! I bleſs thee for what *thou art to me*; I triumph in my intereſt in ſo great a Being, and that with all thy

fulneſs.

fulneſs and *excellencies* thou art mine! I know that all the bleſſings I now enjoy are the fruits of thine *eternal good will* to me; and thy *ſovereign love* is the ſource of all my preſent and future felicity!

Hoſanna to thee, my dear Redeemer! be thou magnified and adored for ever! thou didſt leave the boſom of the Father, the glory of heaven, and the praiſes of angels, to ranſom me from eternal death! didſt offer thy *precious life* in the room of mine *immortal ſoul*! and didſt endure all that vengeance and wrath, under which I ſhould have languiſhed for ever! O LOVE, too glorious, too vaſt for *mortal thought*!

I adore thee, O Bleſſed Spirit! that thou haſt wrought in me a true converſion; honoured me with thy ſanctifying graces; favoured me with numerous manifeſtations of divine love; ſhewn me the Father and the Son; revealed to me the hope of my calling; given me ſome intimations of the nature, work, and joys of heaven, and haſt aſſured me, that ere long it will be the place of my happy and everlaſting abode!

O GLORIOUS TRINITY! eye hath not ſeen, nor hath ear heard, neither can it enter into the heart of man to conceive, what thou haſt prepared for them that love thee! I know 'tis ordered in the counſels of thy grace, that all my temptations and afflictions, though in themſelves both *long* and *terrible*, yet comparatively, but *momentary* and light, ſhall work out;

wut for me a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory! When thou comeſt to be glorified in thy ſaints, and to be admired in all them that believe, then wilt thou *own*, *abſolve*, and *crown me* in the preſence of the univerſal world! As for me, I ſhall behold thy face in righteouſneſs; I ſhall be ſatisfied when I awake with thy likeneſs! thou wilt ſhew me the path of life, thou will bring me into thy glorious preſence, where there is fulneſs of joy, and pleaſures for evermore! No more ſins and temptations, no more ſighs and conflicts, no more calumny and contempt; no more darkneſs, wearineſs, imperfections, pain, ſickneſs and death; but the Lamb that is in the midſt of the throne ſhall feed me, and lead me to living fountains of water, and *thou* ſhalt wipe away all tears from mine eyes! The heavens ſhall vaniſh away like ſmoke, the earth ſhall wax old as a garment, and the inhabitants thereof ſhall die in like manner, but thou haſt made with me an everlaſting covenant; and I ſhall be happy in my God for ever! thou wilt *guide* me by thine unerring wiſdom, and *guard* me by thine almighty love, in all my weary and difficult marches through this vale of tears, and at laſt receive me to thy glory! When my fleſh and heart ſhall fail, when all the ſprings of nature ſhall break, and death ſhall call me home, I know then, O my God! thou wilt be my glory, and the lifter up of my head, my rock, the ſtrength of my heart, and my portion for ever! thou wilt receive

ceive my ſpirit into thine immediate preſence; my body thou wilt *refine* in the grave, and *preſerve* to a glorious reſurrection; and then admit my *whole nature* to the perfection of bliſs, in the viſion of thy glory and enjoyment of thy love for ever! Hallelujah! Hallelujah! Hallelujah!

Upon ſeeing the Thames ſo prodigiouſly frozen, that crowds of people were walking and running on the ice.

January, 1715-16.

COME, Oh! my ſoul! and in the ſilence of *greater* and more *noble* geniuſes that are capable of celebrating the works of their Creator in a more judicious and excellent manner, were their *knowledge* but animated with *affection*, and their breaſts inſpired with *divine love*; in the midſt of thy conflicts, with all the zeal and ardency thou canſt, though thy praiſes ſhould ſometimes be interrupted with a ſigh, endeavour to admire the *divine power* and *majeſty* in this providence!

I adore, O God! the dreadful power of thy glorious greatneſs, which appears in this *amazing ſcene* which preſents itſelf to my view! what a worm, what a graſhopper is man! how *little*, how *contemptible* he appears! how mean a figure, how ſmall a proportion doth

doth he bear amongſt thy *mighty works*! and how is he even *annihilated* in my thoughts, whilſt I am ſwallowed up in this proſpect of thine *omnipotence*! and how much *leſs* and more *inconſiderable* will he ſeem to me, when I ſhall ſtand upon the ſhore of eternity, and the borders of an unſeen world! but THEN will the trueſt eſtimate be made of *man*, when the whole ſpecies collected together, princes mingled, without diſtinction, with peaſants, ſhall be ranged before thine awful bar! and is *this* the *creature*, is it *man*, the glory of whoſe countenance muſt ſoon be changed into rottenneſs, whoſe *applauſe* is ſo apt to pleaſe our vain minds, and his *cenſure* to terrify? Is it the *love* or the *hatred*, the *ſmiles*, or the *frowns* of *man*, that ſo eaſily affect and move my *intereſts* and *paſſions*, whilſt I forget this *Infinite Being*, my great and everlaſting friend, who has heaven and earth, men and angels, death and eternity, in his abſolute and almighty hand!

When I feel the *ſharpneſs* and *extremity* of the air, I cry out in the words of the Pſalmiſt, "Who can ſtand before his cold," Pſ. cxlvii. 17. and when I ſee great bodies of *ice* and *ſnow* lying in confuſed and numerous heaps, like rocks and mountains, with reverence and awful adoration, I think upon my Maker's challenge to his ſervant Job, "Haſt thou entered into the treaſures of *ſnow*, or haſt thou ſeen the treaſures of *hail*, which I have reſerved againſt the time of trouble, againſt the

day

day of battle and war! out of whose womb came the *ice* and the *hoary frost* of heaven, who hath gendered it? the waters are hid as with a stone, and the face of the deep is frozen," Job, xxxviii, 22, 23, 29, 30. How justly do I adore, and give up for incomprehensible some of the *mysteries of my faith*, and matters of *divine revelation*, when the very paths of *nature* and *providence* are so high and unsearchable! Blessed God! could I view thee *all at once*, in the various displays of thy wisdom and power in *creation*, how small a portion should I understand of thee, and how far short would it come of those discoveries thou hast made of thine excellent and infinite perfections, in the *glorious* and *everlasting gospel*! and could I even *thence* ascend and take a prospect of the *heavenly state*, and survey the marvellous scenes of thy power and goodness, majesty and love, which transport the glorified spirits, and adorn and fill those blissful regions; yet all the glories of that perfect state, which shall bear the most beautiful and consummate *strokes of divine workmanship*, will be as *nothing* to that infinite, uncreated *beauty*, which will for ever shine in *thine own Being*! The vision of THYSELF will be the *heaven*! and there will always be an infinite disproportion between the *noblest impressions* of thy goodness on created being, and that which resides in the bottomless depth of thine *immense essences*, which must for ever remain incomprehensible!

This

This is He, O my ſoul! who has been here viſiting the earth in his providence, and has left behind him the mighty tracks of his glorious power, and terrible majeſty! This is He that created the heavens and the earth in *ſix days*, who, if he had pleaſed, could have formed them in a *moment*! This is He that hath given life and being to all things; that created his angels pure and immortal flames, and formed man out of the duſt of the ground! This is He that commandeth the hoſt of heaven, and bound the ocean as with a chain, and fixed the earth that it cannot be moved! the glorious angels *veil* at his infinite ſplendor; and the ſpirits apoſtate, thoſe ſtubborn fiends, tremble at the terror of his countenance! what I now behold and admire is but an open diſplay of that power, which in a ſecret manner, has all along upheld the creatures in being, and continued *exiſtence* to *nature*! this is the ſame unchangeable Jehovah who performed ſo many wonders of old for his people in *Egypt*, and wrought ſuch miracles to deliver them! This is He, O my ſoul! (whoſe adorable and tremendous power is *here* diſplayed before thine eyes) that *divided* the Red Sea in a moment, to open an eſcape to the favoured tribes, and then commanding it immediately to *re-unite*, overwhelmed the hoſt of the inſulting Egyptians! This is He that rained *manna* for his people from heaven in the wilderneſs, and made the *very rocks* ſupply them with water! This is He that ſhut the

mouths

mouths of the *lions*, and reſtrained their ravenous diſpoſitions, ſo that they had no power to touch his ſervant the prophet: who preſerved his true and faithful worſhippers in the midſt of a *flaming* furnace, that not an hair of their heads was ſinged! This is He who commanded the *ſun*, and it ſtood ſtill for *Joſhua*; even the ſun, and it went back for *Hezekiah*; and darkened in a miraculous eclipſe at the crucifixion of our Lord! who cauſed a *new ſtar* to appear at the birth of our Saviour, to guide the Eaſtern Sages to an infant Redeemer! This is He that delivered his Apoſtles from the hands of their perſecutors, cauſing their chains to fall off, and the doors to fly open, whilſt the foundations of the priſon were ſhaken, and the keepers became as dead men! and (which is not leſs miraculous) this is HE, Oh! my ſoul! who according to the purpoſes of his moſt ſovereign and eternal love, at the expence of the blood of his own beloved Son, and by the hand of his moſt gracious Spirit, took me out of the darkeſt and moſt deſolate dungeon of an unconverted ſtate! ſeized me at that *critical juncture* when I was bordering on the brink of everlaſting deſpair! gave ſuch a mighty turn to the ſpiritual and everlaſting affairs of my immortal ſoul! and notwithſtanding the dreadful oppoſition, both from the *powers of darkneſs*, and my own *corruptions*, has favoured me with a *ſober and ſolid aſſurance*, the moſt rational and well grounded hopes, that whether *I burn at a ſtake* in defence of my Re-

 ligion,

ligion, and for the honour of my Saviour; whether I *fall in the field*, or expire on the *gallows* in the cauſe of my ſovereign and my country; or whether my laſt moments be *peaceful* or *diſturbed*, I ſhall be equally welcome to my Redeemer's arms, and ſecured of an happy eternity! And, to add no more, this is HE who will ere long be revealed in flames of fire, attended by all the thrones, dominions, and powers in heaven, to crown his people with *ſalvation*, and to clothe his enemies with ſhame! Great and marvellous are thy works, juſt and true are thy ways, O thou King of ſaints! who would not fear thee, O Lord! and glorify thy name!

And is *this* Being the object of the faith and truſt of a real Chriſtian? Is *this* that God whoſe throne he earneſtly ſupplicates, to whom he bows his knee, and proſtrates all the powers within him? Has this glorious Being, with all his majeſty and ſplendour, not diſdained to intereſt himſelf in *my* welfare? Is his *love* and his *compaſſion* immenſe as his *power*, and are all engaged for my ſalvation! Bluſh, O my ſoul! at thy *diffidence*, *impatience*, and *ingratitude*! How unſpeakably happy art thou (didſt thou but conſider thine own felicity) to be ſo nearly connected with the God of angels! and O what returns of duty and gratitude are due to thine adorable Redeemer! *revere* his awful and aſtoniſhing power, *rely* on the faithfulneſs of his word, and *enjoy* the riches of his grace for ever!

Hackney

Hackney Downs, Jan. 30, 1715-16.

THIS has been a day of great communion with God, and near approaches to his majeſty! *deſigned* and *ſet apart* for ſolemn and extraordinary prayer, in relation to the many great and uncommon circumſtances *of my caſe*: and from 10 till 5 o'clock, how was my ſoul enabled to plead with God! with what *humble confidence* and *joy* was I helped to wreſtle with him! with what *fervent cries* and *earneſt importunity* did my ſoul ſend forth her longing deſires and breathings into the boſom of her God! and with how pleaſant a calm, and ſweet ſerenity of ſpirit, did I at laſt leave all my requeſts in the hands of my dear Redeemer! Thanks be unto God for his gracious preſence and aſſiſtance, in this ſolemn opportunity of ſeeking his face! Amen!

March 6, 1715-16.

IF *health* is ſo pleaſant after a *painful ſickneſs*; if *light* is ſo welcome after *thick darkneſs*; if a *calm* is made more ſenſibly refreſhing by a preceding *ſtorm*, and that *ſpring* the moſt pleaſing and delightful which follows an hard and piercing *winter*, how raviſhing muſt *heaven* be to my *ſorrowful ſpirit!* how pleaſant *eternal reſt* to my *weary ſoul!* what endleſs joys will

flock about my mind, and dwell within my breaſt for ever! after ſuch ſtorms and tempeſts in my *paſſage* through this life, how welcome will be the heavenly *ſhores!* with what infinite delight ſhall I run into the *arms* and repoſe in the *boſom* of my Redeemer! how inconceivably tranſporting will be the *viſion of my God*, the *company* of angels, and the *ſound* of hallelujahs! to be holy and happy in perfection! to have beauty for aſhes; joy for ſorrow; ſongs for ſighs; light for darkneſs; inſtead of *conflicts* a palm of *victory*; after preſent *contempt* among fellow-worms, immortal *honour* among glorious creatures; inſtead of obſcurity, ſilence, and retirement, public congratulations and open appearance among the heavenly hoſt! inſtead of ſighs and groans, the nobleſt ſongs and ſweeteſt praiſes to the Saviour! a ſtate of angelic purity, for a poor, imperfect, uſeleſs life! and for a world of ſin, affliction, darkneſs, and diſcord; a heaven of holineſs, peace, light and harmony, and a world of glory!

March 17, 1715-16.

AND canſt thou, O my ſoul! amidſt all thy mighty trials and conflicts, forget the glories, the felicities of *this happy day?** can the joint efforts of ſin and Satan, the hurries of the world, or thine own preſent darkneſs

* The anniverſary of his *ſpiritual birth-day*, 1705-6.

neſs and confuſion, hinder thee from reflecting that this is the bleſſed, glorious day of *thine eſpouſals to Jeſus*! and has my *mournful ſoul* no cheerful notes, to ſing the triumphs, and celebrate the joys of that *bliſsful time*, when the Prince of life, the Lord of glory, held out the golden ſceptre of his mercy; diſpelled by the light of his countenance, thoſe clouds of ignorance and guilt which involved my ſoul! ſhone upon me with the ſtrong beams of his love; waſhed me in his precious blood, and covered me with the robe of righteouſneſs! enriched me with the *graces*, and enlightened me with the *teachings* of his ſpirit; betrothed me to himſelf in an everlaſting covenant, and made me *one* with him, by an union that can never be diſſolved!

And, O my ſoul! what was infolded and wrapt up in that *happy change!* what *joys*, what *glories* were entailed on that heavenly match! from what a dreadful *eternity of woe* waſt thou ſnatched in that hour, by the arms of this celeſtial bridegroom! he then introduced thee into the preſence of his *offended Father* with favour and acceptance; ſent down his moſt Holy Spirit to dwell in thine heart for ever: appointed thee a guard of angels; told thee what his thoughts were from everlaſting, made thee look with longing for his ſecond coming, and ſealed thee to the day of redemption! That *Sun of righteouſneſs* which roſe upon thee, my ſoul, in that happy morning, though clouds and darkneſs may frequently in-

terpoſe and interrupt the light of his glorious beams, will *never ſet more!* The bleſſed Jeſus then commenced *that acquaintance* with thee which ſhall never be broken off, but be improving to eternity! the ſacred Spirit then took away the *veil* of thick darkneſs which covered my *underſtanding*, and opened the eyes of my mind to behold the great things of a future world! 'twas then he broke the *iron chain* of my obſtinate will, erected the throne of Immanuel in my heart, turned out the infernal fiend who had long governed and deluded my immortal powers, and reſtored me to the *happy freedom* of adoring that bleſſed Being who alone had a right to my allegiance. It was then he fixed my affections on the Redeemer; repreſented him in the moſt amiable and affecting light, and forgetting *all other beauty*, conſtrained me to confeſs and embrace him, as one every way worthy my choiceſt and ſupreme love! yet all the joys and glories of that *bleſſed day*, all the *tenderneſs* he then ſhewed thee, my ſoul, all that *grace and goodneſs*, he has ever ſince made to paſs before thee, is but the *glimpſe* of heaven, the *dawning* of eternal glory!

Who can tell what it is to ſee God *face to face*! to dwell in his immediate preſence! to behold the glorious diſcoveries of his love, grace, power, and majeſty, that are to be ſeen in the court of heaven! what it is to behold the fountain of *electing love*, and with one delightful ſurvey, to ſee how all the various *diſ-*

penſations

penſations in time, conſpired to accompliſh, and ſtrictly ſubſerved, its *eternal purpoſes*! to be perfectly transformed into the likeneſs of thy Lord, and for ever ſwallowed up in the joys of beatific viſion! Who can tell what it is to be perfectly and for ever freed from the guilt, defilement and power of ſin, to have the will wrought up to an exact compliance with, and conformity to the divine will, and a *power imparted*, that will enable the ſoul to render a complete and everlaſting obedience! what it is to poſſeſs a glorified *ſpirit* in a glorified *body*, and under ſuch happy circumſtances, to converſe with glorified ſaints, and a glorified Saviour for ever! This is now, my ſoul, the matter of thy ſober, but raviſhing hope, though not actual fruition. Thou haſt never yet ſeen the *crown*, the *throne*, the *palm*, the *robe*, that are prepared for thee, *worthleſs*, *undeſerving creature*! thou haſt never yet ſung to thy *golden harp*, nor ſeen thy *heavenly companions*, nor heard the *melody of paradiſe*! 'tis not now poſſible for thee to utter or conceive, how tranſporting it will be to ſing the *triumphs* of victory gained over the powers of darkneſs; and after all the foils and repulſes thou haſt met with, how *glorious* to come off more than conqueror over death and hell!

And are theſe the effects of that mighty change which was wrought in me by the bleſſed Spirit, on *this day ten years*? are theſe the fruits and conſequences of a true converſion? hail! happy day! thrice bleſſed and glorious morning!

morning! mayeſt thou ſhine with a *peculiar fairneſs*, and be diſtinguiſhed from all the reſt of the days of the year with a *ſuperior luſtre*! Hoſanna, ye ſaints! hallelujah, O ye angels! ſing, and celebrate this *day of my eſpouſals* to Jeſus! let heaven and earth make up one delightful chorus, to record the *memory* and ſing the *glories* of this day! Why flows not my joyful pen with *pure adoration*! why exults not my raptured ſpirit in *glorious triumphs*! what! Jeſus! is Jeſus MINE! in all his offices, relations, and engagements! in all his perſonal endearments and perfections, in all his fulneſs, glory, and ſufficiency as mediator! *mine* undoubtedly, and for ever! can neither death, nor life, nor things preſent, nor things to come, nor powers below, nor powers above, *ſeparate* me from Chriſt, who is my *life*? O unſpeakable happineſs! infinite, all-comprehending bliſs! Lord, when wilt thou take me to thy glorious arms, that I may breathe forth celeſtial praiſes, and ſing to thy bleſſed name among the choir of angels!

And now, Oh my ſoul! muſt we draw a *cloud* over this charming proſpect, and cloſe ſo delightful a ſong with *melancholy notes*, and the *voice of mourning*! muſt *tears* and *ſighs* bring up the rear of all theſe triumphs! alas! my God, that thou haſt loved me from all eternity; alas! my Jeſus, that thou haſt redeemed me by thy death ſo many ages ago, and not the ſmalleſt ſpark of divine love has been in my breaſt above *ten years*! O goodneſs, *worthy* of a Deity!

Deity! repleniſhed with thine *immenſe fulneſs*, and from eternity ſatisfied with thine own *all-ſufficiency*, haſt thou thus overflowed with kindneſs and love to the works of thine hand, and embraced me in thy *decrees of mercy* before I had exiſtence! but alas! my ſoul, thou haſt a *ſadder tale*, more mournful and humbling conſiderations to reflect on, for, ah! what haſt thou *to ſhew* for this ten years *knowledge of, and communion with Chriſt?* how mean a *building* has been reared upon that promiſing *foundation*, which was laid in ſo wonderful a converſion; canſt thou aſk the Lord Jeſus to come into his garden, and entertain him with the *ſight*, and give him of the *fruits* of his own grace? ſhould he require an account of the talents beſtowed on thee, couldſt thou produce his own, with the addition of *five*, nay, of *two?* ungrateful, diſingenuous ſoul! let *ſhame* and *confuſion* lay me low at the Redeemer's feet! Dear Lord! and haſt thou a *crown* for ME? for ſuch a vile, unthankful, unſerviceable creature as I am? what! for *me*, that have ſo ill improved thy favours, ſo little prized, ſo unworthily entertained thy love! amazing grace! how will every *jewel* in my crown proclaim the *freeneſs* of the donor's grace! to which of all the *ſparkling gems* of glory, ſhall I be able to point and ſay, *this is the reward of ſuch a ſervice! This was given me for bringing ſuch a degree of honour to the Saviour! This was awarded me for enduring ſuch an hardſhip, and ſuffering for his ſake!* Bleſſed Lord! GRACE! GRACE!

GRACE! was the foundation; and the moſt triumphant acclamations of richeſt GRACE will be ſung at laying on the top ſtone! No ſoul, dear Jeſus! among all thy heavenly train of followers, will ever bear *ſtronger and more viſible* characters, of thy free, rich, unchangeable *grace* and *love*, than *mine*! All glory to the Redeemer! hallelujah!

An admiring diſplay of creating power, goodneſs, and wiſdom, 1716.

OH my ſoul! canſt thou walk upon thy heavenly Father's ground, and be ſurrounded on all ſides with the beautiful works of his hands, and not raiſe thyſelf to him in praiſe and adoration, in whom all theſe excellencies are eminently conſpicuous, and from whom they ſpring!

When I conſider the earth, as it is variouſly clad in the ſeveral ſeaſons of the year, when I view it as now in all its *vernal pomp* and gaiety, behold the ground as an *elegant carpet*, or curious piece of *tapeſtry*, embroidered with a beautiful mixture of the *ſweeteſt flowers* that ſend forth an ambroſial fragrance! when I think upon the infinite variety of *plants* and *trees*, from the *byſſop* to the *cedar*, and obſerve every *leaf* to be diſtinct and proper to its kind, purſuant to the order they received in their firſt creation! when I ſee the various proportions and colours of *birds*, and hear their warbling lays, and tuneful

tuneful harmonious ſongs ſounding through the woods! when I am charmed with a train of melodious notes, flowing from a creature void of *reaſon*, and inſenſible of the author of its being! when I ſee the freſh and lively verdure of meadows, the pleaſing variety of greens, that cover and adorn the ground, the buſh, and the tree! when I conſider the lovely and delicate hue of the *lily* and the *roſe*, the exquiſite colouring of the *violet*, and thoſe endleſs beauties which ſhine amidſt the groves and gardens, what wonder does it excite! what rapture in my admiring ſoul!

If I view the earth in its *ſummer's pride* and *glory*, when its ſurface is crowned with the goodneſs of the Lord, and the bounty of his hand: when thouſands of fields ſtand crowded with the *nobleſt grain*, and raviſh the heart of man with the amazing benevolence of his Maker, and the proſpect of a glorious harveſt! If I conſider its *autumnal magazines*, and thoſe plentiful ſtores of all variety of fruits, which it then freely unlades, and pours into the boſom of man! or if I take a view of its *winter ſcenes*, and contemplate the *rain*, the *ſnow*, the *hail*, the *ice*, the *wind*, the *cold*, and compare the *ſeverity* and the *uſefulneſs* of theſe mighty works, I am filled with an *awful*, a *pleaſing* aſtoniſhment and ſurprize! when I conſider every ſpire of graſs as the work of a *Deity*, and that all the angels in heaven have not power to call into exiſtence the *meaneſt fly*! when I think that the curious and admirable

workmanſhip

workmanſhip that is in the ſtructure of the ſmalleſt animals, has reproached the underſtandings of the *greateſt naturaliſts*; and that vain man would be graſping the *myſteries of redemption* with his corrupted reaſon, which is baffled by the moſt minute and inconſiderable parts of the viſible creation; when I call to mind the mountains, the rocks, and the vallies, the roaring wilderneſſes and deſerts, the woods and the beautiful plains, the ſeas, the rivers and fountains of water: when I conſider what *ſwarms* of living creatures inhabit almoſt every foot of earth I tread upon; what millions of ſheep and oxen, and other cattle, are grazing upon hills and paſtures, ranging in the foreſt, or attending the ſervice of mankind; what numbers and variety of fowl, enrich, inhabit, and adorn the air, the water, and the earth: and what worlds of uſeful and admirable creatures dwell in the boſom of the ocean; I adore the infinite grandeur, magnificence, and power of the great Creator, and think how little a portion is known of Him!

When I farther conſider, that the *ocean* and the *earth* which make up this vaſt globe on which I ſtand, and all yon' *glittering glories* of the ſky, were formed out of nothing by the omnipotent will of the *eternal WORD*; and that this *prodigious maſs* of being ſtands immoveable in the yielding air, without the leaſt viſible prop or pillar to ſupport it! When I conſider the ſun, that glorious creature, above

one

one hundred and ſixty times larger than this world! dwell upon! when I contemplate the beautiful body of the *moon*, behold her walking in her brightneſs, and her countenance ſoftened into a mild and amiable light! when I view the various beauty and glory of the *ſtars*, when I conſider their immeaſurable *diſtance*, prodigious *magnitude*, and numberleſs *numbers*! when I reflect that theſe mighty *globes of fire* have hung in a thin yielding æther near ſix thouſand years, without the leaſt diſorder or confuſion, in obedience to the great and ſovereign command of Him who made them! when I obſerve infinite wiſdom and goodneſs in placing thoſe luminous orbs at ſo exact a diſtance as to have their proper influences on this earth, when, ſhould they be lowered into the *ſpheres beneath*, the world would kindle into a flame! when I ſurvey that vaſt and immeaſurable *expanſe* and *canopy of heaven*, in which thoſe glorious luminaries are fixed! when I conſider again that all that I recount and behold, was made for the ſervice and accommodation of MAN, a contemptible worm! that it was all but the work of *ſix days*! and that there are far more glorious and magnificent works accompliſhed in the *inviſible world*, which no mortal can behold and live; I am loſt in wonder and amazement! I ſtand raviſhed in ecſtaſy of thought at the ſtupendous diſplays of my Creator's power, goodneſs, wiſdom, and beauty! with raptures of admiration, though I can underſtand ſo very little of that *glorious beauty* and

admirable ſkill, which lie hid in every part of the creation; yet with joy I cry out "Are theſe the creatures, the workmanſhip of my *heavenly Father*? has he ſtamped ſuch impreſſions of his excellency on theſe *viſible objects*, and left the footſteps of his perfections behind him on *periſhable beings*, to be traced and adored by his reaſonable creatures! Oh! how great is his goodneſs! how great is his beauty! how lovely does he appear, even in the works of his hands, and in the furniture of nature! how *infinitely fair* muſt He be who has imprinted ſuch beautiful characters on his creatures! how boundleſs muſt be *that power*, that upholds and ſuſtains this immenſe theatre of the univerſe! how incomprehenſible muſt that *wiſdom* be, which governs with ſo much order and harmony ſo vaſt a number, and ſuch an endleſs variety of beings! Who can ſee a *bird*, or *beaſt*, or *plant*, much more a *ſtar*, *a ſun*, and not cry out, A DEITY!"

Thus would I adore thee, O my God! for what I behold of thee in creation; but I am delighted to think, when I comtemplate the moſt beautiful appearances here below, that I poſſeſs infinitely more goodneſs and excellence in THYSELF, for my eternal ſatisfaction! when all the glory of this world, and its moſt agreeable objects, ſhall be reduced to their firſt *nothing*, thou wilt be always *new* and *deſirable* to my ſoul, a perpetual fountain of freſh and overflowing delight! the *ſhallow ſtreams* of created good do but mock my expectation, and

increaſe

increaſe my thirſt, but in Thee there is a boundleſs ocean of goodneſs, where I ſhall drink my fill, ſatisfy all my deſires, and reſt with entire contentment for ever! with raptures of ſpirit I leave all the world, in my eſteem and affection, for thy favour! could I call all the enjoyments and poſſeſſions of the earth, by the moſt appropriating titles, *mine*; yet would they be all as the drop of a bucket, as the duſt of the balance to my God! Oh! that thou wouldeſt haſten the *folding up* of theſe viſible heavens, that I may contemplate, adore, and enjoy thee, in that bleſſed heaven that ſhall never be *darkened* or *diſſolved*! Amen!

There was a time when the famous Mr. *Robert Bolton* languiſhed through want: and there was a time when the great *Luther*, a mirror of faith, fortitude, and courage, began to *faint*, and to think of retiring from Germany, 'till being heartened by the countenance of ſome great men, he took courage again, and remained magnanimous and undaunted till death! and is it any wonder that ſuch a *worm* as I, the *weakeſt* and *vileſt* of all God's creatures, ſhould faint and ſink under ſurrounding preſſures of almoſt *all kinds*, who can neither bear adverſity nor proſperity, as I ought, to the glory of God! 'tis far more to be wondered at that I am out of hell!

Wellingborough, June 24, 1724.

ON *Easter Tuesday* I was sent for to a *sick friend*, at *Harding* in *Hertfordshire*; I had been the night before, (and for a long preceding period of time) in a woeful and dismal frame of mind, but in the morning when I awoke, it pleased God the Holy Spirit, to break in with a beam of light and comfort upon my soul, and constrained me to exclaim, "*If God loves me, and will pardon mine iniquities, in his sovereign, uncontrouled grace and goodness, then angels shall love me, men shall love me!*" so with joy and a wonderful alteration in my spirit, I went my journey; and continued, in some measure, in a spiritual frame all the week, till I returned to Wellingborough; when coming among my old temptations and snares, I was again entangled, and forgot this visit of love! O vile, and ungrateful soul!

About a fortnight after, April 27, I went up again to the *same friend*, who had relapsed and become much worse than before. And now I went in the most *dark*, *carnal*, and *unworthy* frame, that any converted soul could possibly be in! Ah! what is a *David*, a *Peter*, or a *Paul*! what are the most established, the most experienced Christians, if left one moment to *themselves*! there is abundant occasion to WATCH and PRAY! for in this forlorn and dreadful state of mind, I entered the verge

verge of one of the moſt awful diſpenſations of divine Providence! Oh! how unfit was my carnal ſoul to meet her God in his dreadful judgments! how unſuitable was the temper of my ſpirit to have improved that *aſtoniſhing providence!* from *Monday night* till *Wedneſday*, I continued in this wretched diſpoſition, awfully impreſſed with the ſore diſpenſation of God in the *family*, not without terrible apprehenſions concerning *myſelf*, as full of ſin and guilt: but I was ſo bound in ſpirit *that I could not ſhed one tear, nor offer up one cry to God in a believing way, though ſo ſurrounded with diſtreſs!* thus I continued for two days: till Wedneſday, April 29, 1724, as I was ſitting in the chamber where my ſick friend was, deeply muſing upon my preſent *moſt unſuitable condition*, in thoſe awful circumſtances, thoſe words were faſtened on my mind with heavenly power, Jer. ii. 2, 5, *I remember the kindneſs of thy youth, the love of thine eſpouſals; ſince that time what iniquity haſt thou found in me, that thou art gone far from me, and haſt walked after vanity, and art become vain?* thus were the words brought by the Bleſſed Spirit, to me! but oh! the efficacy, condeſcenſion, and grace of this melting expoſtulation! how *gentle* and *moving* a reprehenſion! when I deſerved the revengeful thunders and lightnings of vindictive juſtice! Oh that my ſoul may never be an hour from under the powerful remembrance and influence of it, to my dying day! how bleſſed a change of diſpoſition ran through all the

powers of my soul; what tears! Oh what multitudes of tears flowed from my eyes! tears of *love* and *joy*, *repentance* and *humiliation!* I immediately retired to my own chamber, and with the greatest freedom, liberty, and confidence, poured out my whole soul to the Lord, emptied my very heart into his bosom, and from the borders of hell, I was raised even to the gates of heaven, in the enjoyment of Christ! nor was this a transient glance, or short visit, but an abiding, growing, and improving dispensation of light and grace, continued from *that hour* even to the *present time!* that night I lay down in my bed, with Christ in the arms of my faith; and when I awoke he was still with me! I had many exceeding precious Scriptures, that night, set home upon my soul, but in particular Ps. xxiv. 4, *One thing have I desired of the Lord, that will I seek after, that I may dwell in the house of the Lord all the days of my life, to behold the beauty of the Lord, and to inquire in his temple.* Most ardently did I then desire to be found in every duty and waiting upon God in all his public institutions.

The next day I providentially cast my eye upon a book in the house, which proved to be *Dr. Owen, on Communion with the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit!* I had never read it before; but looking into it hastily, I read that part where he treats of the comforting work of the SPIRIT, and asserts, that he performs it *freely*: "*Hence*," says he, "*that comfort is given unexpectedly, when the heart has all the reason in*

the world to look for distress and sorrow: thus sometimes 'tis the first means of recovering a backsliding soul, who might justly expect to be utterly cast off. All the book was made to me by the Blessed Spirit full of wonderful joy and consolation, and mightily confirmed my experiences the day before.

Oh the inexpressible, inconceivable greatness of sovereign grace! how does it glory and triumph in its own *unbounded largeness* and *freeness!* how worthy of the infinite and incomprehensible God, are *these proceedings* of his mercy, and how impossible to be imitated in their extent by any created being! no! 'tis none but a God *that can thus* FORGIVE and LOVE! not a thousandth part of such grace and goodness dwells in the united hearts of angels and men! and how did *infinite wisdom* shine in the *time* of this great and gracious manifestation! had I not THEN, *just then*, been delivered in my soul, and emancipated from the power of sin and Satan! how quickly must I have *sunk* and *died* under the weight of my burden! but, Oh Lord! I acknowledge how *righteous* thou wouldest have been, if thou hadst permitted me to have *finally* wandered from thee, and to have gone on in a course of apostacy till I had dropped into hell! thou wouldest have been just, hadst thou made me a *remarkable example* of thine awful displeasure, filled me with thine insupportable terrors, and made my *conscience* as a fiery oven! thou mightest have hung me out as a *spectacle* and terrible

warning

warning to all the world in the *horrors of despair*, and made me to eat the gall, the wormwood, the bitter fruits of my departing from the living God! thou mightest have taught other wanton and undutiful children, by my corrections, to *tremble* and *return*; and made my miscarriages a *dreadful sea-mark* to the present and future generations!

Oh for words to express the unlimited riches of *this grace of God!* Father! how infinite is this love! how astonishing this forbearance and mercy! assuredly this is known in *heaven*, and all that glorious company there will talk and tell of it, and rejoice and wonder to eternity.

EXTRACTS

FROM

VARIOUS LETTERS.

LETTER I.

——IT has ſeemed good to Infinite Wiſdom then, that amidſt the *various diſtributions* of providence on this occaſion, ſo ſmall a part ſhould fall to my ſhare, as that you adviſed me of! I heartily rejoice and bleſs God that I was kept at a cautious diſtance, and relied with no more confidence on ſome particular *impreſſions of ſpirit*, in reference to this affair, as I hinted to you; which otherwiſe the great adverſary of ſouls would have made very bad improvement of. Eternal Hoſannas be to that wiſdom and love, that has founded our future and everlaſting concerns on a baſis that cannot be overturned, or ſhaken by any *preſent diſpenſation!* However we may ſeem to be *neglected* of Heaven, and *overlooked* ſometimes by divine Providence,

Providence, there is an *inviſible hand* leading on the ſoul all the while to the manſions of everlaſting glory, to the paradiſe of ineffable bliſs! and theſe *darkſome clouds* and *mournful paſſages*, will but brighten the joys, and enhauce the raptures of a glorious eternity!

LETTER II.

Dear Sir,

IT is occaſion of far greater grief and concern to me, than it can be to any other, and lies with a *continual preſſure* upon my mind, that through a variety of temptations and diſtreſſes, I have been ſo long baniſhed from my friends; and which is unſpeakably more grievous, incapacitated for the glory and ſervice of God! Through the impetuous ſhocks I have endured, my *body* has been ſo weakened, and all the *powers of my ſoul* ſo unhinged, that many precious years have paſſed away with little profit! wounding thought! piercing and melancholy reflection! I, whoſe life ſhould have been *one continued act* of praiſe and adoration, perpetually ſetting forth the glory and honour of the Redeemer, have been chained downby temptation, toſſed upon a tempeſtuous ocean, and loſt in a howling wilderneſs! at the firſt view of theſe things I am ready to cry out, how *myſterious* and *unaccountable* are theſe

divine

divine proceedings! beyond the imagination of angels are these footsteps of our God! but when I reflect upon *myself*, and consider my exceeding great unworthiness; what an ungrateful and disingenuous part I have acted, in forgetting the most astonishing displays of divine grace and love, I wonder that I am still a partaker of them!

When I look upon almost *nineteen years* experience, my soul is overwhelmed within me! On the one hand I am *comforted*, on the other *confounded!* Ravished I am, and that *justly*, to think of the favour of God, manifested to my soul in my first conversion, in so remarkable a manner; and that all the efforts of the *powers of darkness*, the many *cutting trials of life*, and (which is more than all) the accursed *body of sin and death*, have not *yet* been able to pluck me out of his hand! O glorious provision of the *covenant of grace!* admirable contrivance and management of the salvation of the elect! and for such a worm as *I*! shall *I* be admitted to the divine throne, dwell for ever in the immediate presence of Jehovah, behold his face, partake of his holiness, sing his praise, and for ever bathe in the ocean of his eternal love! O all ye redeemed ones, admire this for ever and for ever!

But when, on the other hand, my dear friend, I look back and observe how *little* all this while has been done for the interest of my great Lord; how partial my obedience has been, how much beneath the *hope* and *dig-*

nity

nity of a Chriſtian I have lived and acted; when I view the perfect example of Jeſus Chriſt, and the holy lives and triumphant deaths of many of his followers, then ſorrow and confuſion fill my ſoul! Did *Paul*, that laborious man, think himſelf the leaſt of ſaints? then what muſt I call *myſelf?* ſure, if the glorious riches of God's grace to any *one* redeemed and pardoned ſoul, will excite the admiration and praiſe of the ſaints and angels in heaven, higher than all the reſt, I am that *diſtinguiſhed object*!

When I conſider the days of old, and call to remembrance my ſongs in the night, the years of the right hand of the Moſt High, I cry out with Job, "Oh! that it was with me as in months paſt, when the candle of the Lord ſhone upon my head, and when by his light I walked through darkneſs."—There was a time when I ſoared on high, and dwelt in the divine embraces! when Chriſt crucified continually captivated my ſoul, drank up my thoughts, and engroſſed all the powers within me! when all the pleaſures and delights of this world, were but as a *dead carcaſs*, and my ſoul longed for *beatific viſion*! when electing, redeeming, and converting love filled me with admiration night and day! when nothing was dear to me, *compared with* the image and favour, the perſon and preſence of the Saviour! nothing odious and burdenſome but *ſin*! when I was as if the *veil of fleſh* were drawn, and in every act of worſhip, as it were joined the hallelujahs

hallelujahs of the bleſſed! when I walked in the conſtant views of eternity, and perpetually by faith held a holy, humble intercourſe with the majeſty of heaven! then was my ſoul always on the wing, and ready for her *celeſtial flight*!

Happy time! but that time is no more; bleſſed days! but thoſe golden days are over and gone; diſtinguiſhed vouchſafements of heaven! but ah! too little valued and improved! whither, Oh! whither has my wretched ſoul wandered for her Redeemer? ſuch times! ſuch bliſsful times! were once my glory and my triumph! and theſe ſeaſons are ſtill in the hands of almighty love, to reſtore again when he pleaſes. He made the ſtars, and Orion, and turns the ſhadow of death into the morning! Fain would I riſe! fain would I *return* and *ſhine* once more to the honour of my Redeemer, and the comfort and encouragement of his people, before I go hence and be no more ſeen! I lift up my eyes to him who is wonderful in counſel, and excellent in working! *there is nothing that can juſtify deſpair*! eſpecially when I conſider, among many others, the following paſſages: Hoſ. xiv, 1, 6. Joel, ii. 25, 26, 27. Ezek. xxxvii, 1,—15. by theſe declarations, ſometimes very refreſhing ſupports have been adminiſtered to my mind, under all the ſorrows I have ſuffered! and in the midſt of all I have found, that in God's favour is life; his ſmile is the heaven of angels; his diſpleaſure the hell of the damned!

LETTER III.

IT gives me great pleaſure to find you borne up by the arms of everlaſting love, and that the great Jehovah, in his ſecret and unſearchable providence, has, in ſome meaſure, mitigated your diſtreſſes, and ſtayed his rough wind in the day of his eaſt wind. This is the admirable effect of his incomprehenſible goodneſs and tender compaſſions, who remembers our frame, and knows that we are but duſt. O wretched creature that I am, who am ſo diſtruſtful and unthankful after all thoſe *miracles* that have been done for *me*!

You ſay, "*That you hope you ſhall yet live to praiſe him, who is the health of your countenance, and your God: that his word has been better to you than your neceſſary food, and that you would not have been without* ONE *of all thoſe troubles you have met with; that you groan continually under a body of ſin, and long to be delivered from it, &c.*" O happy creature! to be thus favoured of the Lord: while thouſands and millions never ſhall hear the name of *Jeſus*, till they ſhall ſee him on his throne of judgment! Ten thouſand times ten thouſand may hear of him in the miniſtry of the everlaſting goſpel, and yet periſh with aggravated condemnation in eternal burnings! What peculiar grace has made the diſtinction in your circumſtances! many ſtrong ones would have ſunk beneath the weight of your burdens, but *you* have been ſup-

ported. The eye of *ſenſe* and *carnal reaſon* can ſee none of that *beauty, glory, and wiſdom*, in the diſpenſations of divine Providence, which lie ſweetly open to a *believing mind*; which ſees all flowing through the ſanctifying ſtream of a Redeemer's blood, and a part of the *purchaſe* of his death, and *proviſion* of his covenant.

LETTER IV.

Dear Couſin,

'TIS with abundant ſatisfaction, I accept this opportunity of expreſſing my unfeigned concern for your *trueſt* and *moſt important welfare*, and acquainting you with *ſome* of thoſe *many* ardent wiſhes for your *future* felicity, which have a long time been ſmothering in my breaſt; and, perhaps, might never have been diſcloſed to you, but for the *encouragement* at the foot of your epiſtle: and the rather do I rejoice herein, becauſe I am ſo *utterly unfit* to diſcover the intentions of my mind in *perſonal converſation*. Many a time have I addreſſed myſelf to a work of this nature, when I have been conſtrained *to deſiſt*, not knowing its iſſue and conſequences: yea, I have more than once finiſhed a letter of this import, and through groundleſs ſurmiſes have forborne to ſend it to you:—hereupon at laſt, I reſolved to content myſelf with *weeping in ſe-*

cret for you, believing that he who ſees in ſecret would anſwer me *openly* with a happy return of my prayers, in your *real* and *ſaving converſion*: but your *kind invitation* has now opened a paſſage to my *freeſt thoughts*, and I ſhould be ſtrangely wanting in my duty to God, and affection to you, ſhould I let ſo fair an opportunity as the preſent ſlip away, without teſtifying the *truth* of my regard.

You would hardly believe I had uttered ſo many *ſecret ſighs* to God, and was daily wreſtling for you at a throne of grace; that a deep concern for your ſpiritual condition, hath oft diſſolved me *all in tears*, and given birth to a thouſand prayers and wiſhes, did I refuſe to comply with an *intimation* I have ſo long deſired, but indeed, could never have expected. Not to tire you then, dear Couſin, with any farther apology, give me leave to aſſure you, that as often as I think of you, 'tis with that affection and reſpect which the *laws of nature* and *affinity* require: even *that* tye is ſo dear and ſacred, that no outward circumſtances ſhould alienate our affections. If we confine our regard to the *cabinet of clay*, and overlook the *jewel* within, *the immortal ſpirit*, 'tis no wonder that our affections riſe or fall according to the changes of outward providences: thoſe groveling minds that ſoar no higher, nor look beyond the narrow limits of this vain world, and know of no *greater* and *better things* than its tranſitory honours, gains, and pleaſures, will careſs that friend under a *ſmiling*, whom they

they will desert and disown in an *afflicting* providence! alas! the *immortal nature* of man is too elevated to be *disgraced* or *dignified*, *ennobled*, or *debased* by such minute and trifling circumstances as the *possession* or *want* of gold and silver: and were our affections knit rather to the *minds*, than to the *external*, *bodily* state of our relations, the bond would be more *lasting* and *indissoluble*. I must beg leave to tell you, 'tis from such reflections as these, I freely own that I retain the *same kindness* for you, if not *greater*, than when your condition in the world was more *prosperous* and *favourable*. I consider sometimes and recount with myself, how *Providence* hath wrought for me, and that it is owing to the goodness and sovereignty of God, yea very *particular* and *singular* appearances, that I am not laid upon a level with, nay, much *below* you! I beg that I may be more sensible of, and heartily thankful for the divine conduct herein; and as far as God shall enable me, in my *little sphere*, and *narrow capacity*, would express my gratitude towards *Him*, by being helpful to *you*.

But ah! *Cousin*, these little streams of *natural affection*, are justly swallowed up, and lost in the ocean of a *spiritual love*! as I said before, so I still repeat, my greatest affection is for your *better part*, which is of divine extraction! by nature allied to *Seraphims*, and can claim kindred with those *celestial spirits*; of a vast capacity and endless duration, designed for a *happy* or *miserable* eternity! capable of serving

and enjoying for ever, the glorious and incomprehenſible Deity, or ſuffering the torments of perpetual baniſhment from that fountain of felicity; and which muſt triumph with *angels*, or wail with devils for ever. 'Tis *this ſoul* you poſſeſs I ſo ardently love, and to put you upon a ſerious inquiry into its preſent ſtate is what I moſt deſire.

Flowers of rhetoric, as they are not at my command, ſo neither are they neceſſary to convey to your underſtanding the *great* and *momentous concerns* of your ſalvation. The weighty matters that depend between God and his offending creatures, are too ſad and awful to be trifled with, and require to be managed with the *utmoſt ſobriety* and *plainneſs*. Tell me then, *dear Couſin, how ſtand matters between God and you?* reſt not in a ſuperficial view and ſlight ſurvey of your ſpiritual ſtate! conſider moſt ſeriouſly how great is the buſineſs you engage in, when you are *trying your evidences* for future happineſs! do not ſatisfy yourſelf in a matter of the laſt importance, upon ſo weak a foundation, as will not *bear you* another day, and paſs the teſt at the *great tribunal*. What kindneſs can you call it to *deceive yourſelf*, and that in an affair wherein your ſoul, your *eternal* ALL is wrapt up! content not yourſelf to go along with the crowd of *nominal Chriſtians*, in a *dead* religion and *form* of godlineſs, but preſs after its *life* and *power*. *Real converſion*, without which none can enter into the kingdom of God, is of a more *myſterious* and *heavenly*

venly nature, a more *wonderful* and *important* work than the generality of perſons do imagine. To be born in a *land of light*, and favoured with the advantages of a *religious parentage*, and *ſober education*, to be free from groſſer and more vile *enormities*, and the being endued with the *ſweeteſt natural diſpoſitions*, with many *amiable* and *pleaſing accompliſhments*, however in themſelves deſirable and lovely, come far ſhort of that *great* CHANGE which is ſo neceſſary an introduction to bleſſedneſs! has there then, *Couſin*, been any *great* and *diſcernable* alteration wrought in your heart, by the Bleſſed Spirit, in regard to ſpiritual and divine things? have you effectually been taught the degeneracy of your nature, and the miſery of your eſtrangement from God and his *communion*? are you convinced of the neceſſity of the *Spirit* to renew you, as well as the *blood of atonement* to pardon you? have you felt your own *utter inability* to help yourſelf, and ſeen the *inſufficiency* of your own righteouſneſs to *juſtify* you in the ſight of God? have you ſeen the *evil nature* of ſin, and *wept* to think *how much* it coſt a dying Redeemer? and as an effect of this, have you been taught to betake yourſelf to the Bleſſed Jeſus, and helped to lay hold of him, by a *true* though *weak* faith, and devolved all the concerns of your precious ſoul on him alone? flying to his *grace* to *pardon* you; his *robe* of perfect righteouſneſs to *cover* you; to his *blood* to *cleanſe* you, and to his ſpirit to *ſanctify* and *ſave* you? have you been convinced of

the infinite excellencies of a *God in Chriſt*, and choſen him as the object of your *ſupreme affection?* can you look through the vanity of theſe *painted trifles* that ſurround you, and joy in the ſmiles of your covenant God? have you left the *creature* in your eſteem, and do you cry out, *none but* CHRIST? doth the *glory* of God poſſeſs the higheſt room in your thoughts? is that the *top* and *chief* of your ambition, the tendency and purſuit of your life? and is nothing ſo *dear* to you and ſo much *rejoiced* in, as the intereſt of your mighty Saviour? if *ſo*, then happy are you indeed, that ere you ſaw the light of life! happy day, wherein you were *born!* and yet more happy *day of death!* bleſſed, may you ſay, the womb that bare me, and the paps that gave me ſuck! happy! thrice happy ſoul! whom the Lord of glory delights to honour! thy riches cannot be told, thy poſſeſſions never ſurveyed; the heights and depths, the lengths and breadths of thy bleſſedneſs, no *angel's arm* can meaſure, or *heart* conceive. Then all the *afflictions* and *dark Providences* you meet with in the world, ſhall ſerve but as *foils* to ſet off the ſtedfaſtneſs of your Redeemer's love! and ſwell your notes to an higher pitch of triumphant joy, when this *ſcene of trouble* ſhall paſs away, and be ſucceeded by a *ſtate of reſt and glory!*

But if NOT; Oh! admire for ever that grace which hath ſtill continued you under means of ſalvation, and hath not ſuffered you to be *ſnatched* hence, in an unprepared ſtate! how many

many have been ſummoned to appear before the tribunal of an angry judge; whoſe *ſun is ſet* in a perpetual cloud, and the things of their peace for ever hid from their eyes, whilſt you are ſurrounded with the *beams* of goſpel grace! Oh! then may you *know* your mercy, *prize* your opportunity, and if *yet* you have been blind to the *alluring charms* of goſpel invitations, and have refuſed to yield yourſelf a willing ſubject of Chriſt's kingdom; if *yet* you have ſtood out againſt the *melting diſcoveries* of divine grace, and that proviſion it hath made in Chriſt for the ſalvation of ſinners: if you have *yet* confeſſed no wonders, myſteries, and glories in an INCARNATE GOD, may you now become a captive to a *Redeemer's beauty*, and give up your ſoul to him, engaged by infinite obligations! may you ſtrive to recommend his perſon and his ways to a *deluded world!* and whilſt others are boaſting of the increaſe of their *corn*, and *wine*, and *oil*, and bleſs themſelves in a flow of *creature delights*, may you be placing your happineſs in God alone, and ſcorn all the pleaſures of the *giddy age*, compared with that joy which is taſted in the *divine communion*! Oh, *Couſin*, religion is no *joyleſs*, *melancholy* thing, as thoſe that *hate* it fain would *have* it to be: 'tis the *only cordial* that is to be found in this almoſt loſt and abandoned world: and to this you will ſet your ſeal, if you have ever experienced that the Lord is gracious, and been helped to maintain any fellowſhip with him! It is a *flower* indeed that grows not on

the

the ſoil of *corrupted nature*, but ſprings in the midſt of the *paradiſe* above, and is thence tranſplanted into the hearts of God's children! do but try, *Couſin*, and you will find, that wiſdom's ways are ways of pleaſantneſs, and all her paths are peace! believe me, for I have found the ſervice of Chriſt to be *perfect freedom*, and in keeping his commandments there is the *trueſt pleaſure*!

'Tis my *bewailed unhappineſs*, that though ſuch marvellous grace has appeared to me, yet through my *natural temper* and *incapacity*, I cannot as I would repreſent religion in its *native charms*, and ſhew its beautiful and attractive excellence: but were I endued with ability to draw the picture of *true religion*, and called to ſpeak from my own experience of it, I would expoſe it in all the *unaffected airs* of joy and cheerfulneſs, ſubſtantial delight, and rational tranſports, intermixed with *conflicts*, which ſerve but as *foils* to the victorious Chriſtian! Oh, *Couſin*, the *plain array* of ſerious godlineſs would not diſgrace your *blooming age*, or ſpoil the pleaſure of your *youthful days*! for my part, I muſt confeſs, I never taſted *one drop* of true joy, all the long days of my *unregenerate ſtate*! there are no ſuch *unmixed ſweets* to be found within the compaſs of nature, as are produced by a ſenſe of *divine love*, and a ſaving intereſt in the righteouſneſs of the Redeemer! for what ſhould make our hearts *overflow* and *ſwim* in joy, if not the preſent fruition of Chriſt, and the aſſurance of eternal life!

account

account all the accompliſhments of art and nature, all the perfections of body and mind, but *loſs*, without the knowledge of a *crucified Saviour*! 'tis this will ſtand you in ſtead, *dear Couſin*, in the great day, when all the blandiſhments of this vain world ſhall utterly vaniſh away! there are many things about which we are *cumbered*, many things with which we are *delighted*, but there is ONE *thing* needful; and if you are poſſeſſed of that, you have every thing that can make you truly bleſſed! all the pleaſures of an everlaſting kingdom, the poſſeſſion of all *created* and *uncreated* good, is connected with an *intereſt in Chriſt*! I cannot expreſs myſelf more amply and emphatically than in thoſe golden lines of *admirable Quarles:*

In having *all things*, and not THEE, what have I?
Not having *Thee*, what have my labours got?
Let me enjoy but *Thee*, what farther crave I?
And having *Thee* alone, what have I not?
I wiſh nor ſea, nor land, nor would I be,
Poſſeſs'd of *Heaven*, Heaven unpoſſeſſed of THEE!

My dear Couſin, if you are but intereſted in a dying Jeſus, and within the bond of an *everlaſting covenant*, you may look with diſdain on the glory of an *imperial crown*, and not envy the greateſt *princeſs* in the world! to be rich in faith, and an heir of heaven, is an infinitely preferable

preferable and more laſting portion, than thouſands of gold and ſilver! with what triumphant ſcorn would I quit the delights of every *earthly paradiſe*, the honours and pleaſures of ten thouſand ſuch empty worlds as this, to ſhare in ſuch amazing bliſs! I ſpeak this, *dear Couſin*, that your worldly circumſtances, however low and diſcouraging, may be no bar to hinder you in your purſuit of a bleſſed immortality! It was the Apoſtle's command reſpecting Timothy, let no man deſpiſe thy youth; ſo may I ſay concerning you, let no man deſpiſe thy condition, or inferior circumſtances, in this preſent life; *religion* alone is true *nobility*; God is your *father*, Chriſt your *huſband*, Saints your *companions*, Angels your *guardians*, and heaven your eternal manſion, if *religion* reign in your heart! you ſhall live a life of peace and ſatisfaction here, and at laſt be borne in the arms of angels, and guarded by a band of *mighty Cherubims* to the regions of eternal reſt!

Oh, *Couſin*, had I now that *retirement*, and *calm compoſure*, I heretofore enjoyed; thoſe ſpiritual advantages and views of eternity that once I had, that familiar converſe with the inviſible ſtate, and frequent glimpſes of approaching glory; had I that lively ſenſe of ſin's malignity, the infinite value and love of Jeſus, the utter inſufficiency of all earthly comforts to ſatisfy and bleſs an immortal creature, the haſty paſſage of our fleeting time, and that world of happineſs, or world of woe, into which

which we muſt quickly be diſpatched! I ſay, if *theſe things* did but now affect me as they were wont, and I had time to deliver all my thoughts, I ſhould be utterly at a loſs to deſiſt, and love to *your ſoul* would make me wiſh my pen might *ever*, *ever* flow with the perſuaſive rhetoric of *an angel*, or the moving oratory of one *riſen from the dead*! but yet I know, could I beſpeak and intreat you in the language of *Seraphs*, could I accent every word *with ſighs* and mingle it *with tears*, it would be all in vain, if not aſſiſted and rendered effectual by *almighty grace*! And therefore, *dear Couſin*, after all that I can either ſay or do, in order to promote your eternal happineſs, I would *retreat*, and *retire* to my God, and pour out my ſoul in tears for you at the footſtool of the throne of grace! God grant that you may find mercy at the *great day*! may we both have a joyful meeting at our Father's houſe, and ſit down together in eternal glory! I add not, *dear Couſin*, though my ſoul is full; I conclude *writing* to you, but not *praying* for you! Pardon the prolixity of this epiſtle, remembering it is the *firſt* and may poſſibly be the *laſt*, you will ever receive from your affectionate kinſman,

T. W.

LETTER V.*

Dear ——— March 23, 1710-11.

I COULD not content myſelf with writing to your ſiſter, without ſending a few lines to *you alſo*, whoſe ſalvation, with that of hers, lies with equal weight upon my mind; and though you have not *expreſſly invited* me hereunto, yet your *approbation* of what was hinted in more *remote* and *obſcure terms*, was to me a ſufficient inducement to believe, that a letter of this import would not be *utterly diſagreeable*. I promiſe myſelf, *repeated proteſtations* are needleſs, to perſuade you of the reality of my reſpect for you, as you are *related* and *dear* to me in the bonds of nature. I can ſincerely ſay, I entertain as hearty an eſteem for you, as if you were poſſeſſed of the *richeſt confluence* of worldly happineſs, and *ſwam* in an *ocean* of temporal enjoyments: I would not that any circumſtances in this world, ſhould in the leaſt eſtrange or alienate my affections: remembering how eaſily divine Providence could have *ſhifted hands*, and dealt out *thoſe afflictions* to me,

* The following letter being in *ſubſtance* and *deſign* the ſame as that immediately preceding, the inſertion of it in this *ſmall* collection may appear rather *unneceſſary*; but when it is conſidered that a *rich* and *beautiful* variety of *expreſſion*; a *rational* and *manly addreſs*; and a very *tender* and *affectionate regard* for the ſpiritual welfare of near relatives, diſtinguiſh this, as well as the foregoing epiſtle, the editor is perſuaded it will not be *unacceptable*; Heaven grant it may be *uſeful*.

me, with which it has ſeen good you ſhould be exerciſed: and knowing how little all the *vain diſtinctions* of this empty world can depreciate or raiſe an immortal ſoul. 'Tis *SIN*, 'tis *SIN* alone, that debaſes *human nature*, and renders it ignominious and vile! and if *ſin* be pardoned and ſubdued through the righteouſneſs and ſpirit of the Redeemer, however you may be overlooked and deſpiſed in the world, you are a fit companion for the *loftieſt Seraph* in glory, yea an object wherein the *glorious God himſelf* will delight with everlaſting complacency! with what encouragement then may I addreſs myſelf to an attempt of this nature, when a full conviction of the *ſincerity of my deſires*; the *truth* and *ſpirituality* of my affection, hath already *poſſeſſed your mind*, and paved the way for a *kind reception*.

Retire therefore a little, my young friend, and ſurvey the conſtitution and powers of your ſoul; its vaſt capacity and aſpiring nature, and ſay if every faculty does not ſpeak its *deſign for immortality*? What proviſion then is made for this *immortal ſpirit*, which cannot be ſatisfied with any thing below the GOD that made it? Oh! that I could write to you in thoſe melting ſtrains; with thoſe affecting and awakening views, which ſtrike *this ſoul*, when on the borders of eternity! Oh! that I could plead with you with that *tenderneſs* and *concern* which the importance of the matter requires! let me intreat you to make a moſt diligent ſearch, and try the truth of your ſpiritual ſtate, by the

touchſtone of the Word; and may you attend to it with that *impartiality* and *ſolicitude*, as though you were not to be allowed a *ſecond hearing*, but as ſoon as you have done, to be ſummoned to the bar of God's judgment, there to ſtand a *more awful teſt*, and undergo the *ſevereſt ſcrutiny!* Oh! *Couſin*, reſt not upon any thing that will not bear the examination of an all-ſearching eye, and anſwer the demands of inflexible juſtice! venture not ſo momentous a concern as the ſalvation of your precious ſoul upon *ſlight* and *ſuperficial* grounds: remember your *all* is embarked here, if your *ſoul* be loſt, what have you *more?* it would be a thouſand times better for you to be *eternally nothing*, than to be *eternally miſerable!* how neceſſary then, that this matter be put out of ſuſpenſe, and that the ſtreſs and weight of your *hope*, be not laid on a ſandy foundation! Who would leave ſo vaſt an affair to *doubtful uncertainty*! Is it not better to know *now* the reality of your condition; that if it be *good* you may triumph in the aſſurance of it! and if *otherwiſe*, you may fly to Chriſt for redreſs before it becomes *hopeleſs* and *irretrievable*! turn then within yourſelf, and ſeriouſly inquire, "Oh, my ſoul! what is the ſecurity of thy preſent and eternal welfare? what haſt thou to plead for thy juſtification before God, and admiſſion into glory! thou art involved in the *common guilt* of the firſt apoſtacy, and art by nature a ſtranger and an enemy to God! what *change* haſt thou undergone with reſpect to thy ſtate and frame!

has

has Jeſus by his *righteouſneſs* freed thee from the threatenings of a violated law, and by his *power* broken the bands of thy ſpiritual death! haſt thou paſt the limits of *formal godlineſs*, and been brought to live by faith on the Son of God? and is the favour and image of God of more value in thine eſteem than the poſſeſſion of a world, were it all one maſs of gold or pearl?"

I aſk not, *Couſin*, for *tranſports* and *exceſſive joys*, or the *violent operations of terror and deſpair*, to evidence the truth of your converſion: if the dealings of God with you have been more *mild* and *ſecret*, and your heart, like *Lydia's*, hath been *gently* opened to welcome and entertain the King of glory; your ſtate is equally *ſafe* and *bleſſed*. If you have been laid under ſuch convictions of your *original defilement*, as have cauſed you to abhor the pollution of your nature; if you have ſeen ſo much of the *ſuitableneſs* and *glory* of God's deſign of ſaving loſt ſinners in a way of *free and ſovereign* grace, as to deem it the moſt excellent method, and to relinquiſh *all other hopes* for heaven; if you have ſuch an eſtimation for a crucified Jeſus as to prefer him to all the relations and enjoyments of this life; if the ſwaying care and concern of your conduct is to *pleaſe* and *glorify* God; if you not only plead the *righteouſneſs* of Chriſt to juſtify you, but his *almighty grace* to enable you to diſcharge all the duties you are called to, and to keep you to his heavenly kingdom; if upon a ſerious exa-

mination of your ſtate, you can ſincerely (though with weakneſs and trembling) ſay, "*Through grace theſe are the prevailing inclinations of my ſoul*," you may give glory to God, the giver of theſe good and perfect gifts! ſurely the lines are fallen to you in pleaſant places, and you have a goodly heritage! know your *own happineſs*; admire *Chriſt's Love*; delight in his *communion*; ſtudy his *glory*, and diſdain all the *deluſive charms* of ſinful pleaſures! rejoice, and be exceeding glad, in a grateful ſenſe of divine grace, and the pleaſing proſpect of future felicity! God hath done more for you, *dear Couſin*, in giving you his Son, than if he had put into your hands the ſceptre of all the kingdoms upon earth; crowned you with *ſtars*, and inveſted you with the *univerſe*! pardon of ſin; peace with God; a divine nature, and an hope of glory; are the things which afford the trueſt pleaſure, and are ſuited to the nature of an immortal being!

If hitherto (for I cannot pronounce your ſtate) you have been a ſtranger to the Lord Jeſus, and the powerful workings of renewing grace; may you yet be prevailed on to enter into wiſdom's ways, before the *ſilver cord* be looſed, or the *golden bowl* be broken, and the days and years draw nigh in which will be no pleaſure! Are you *too young* to be happy! remember, *Couſin*, there are *younger* than you, now ſounding forth the praiſes of God in glory: and there are alſo your *juniors* plunged in the gulph of endleſs miſery! can you enjoy

too

too much of heaven *beforehand*, or be tired with the foretaſtes of glory to come? can you ſet out *too early* in the Chriſtian race? or *too ſoon* arrive at the deſired goal? ſhould we look into the breaſts of *grey-headed ſinners*, or be told their ſentiments upon a *dying bed*, when conſcience is awakened, we ſhould find 'tis *this* that ſo afflicts their thoughts, and ſinks their ſouls like a mountain of lead, *that they remembered not their Creator in the days of their youth*! that the *ſprightly beams* of their morning ſun ſhould ſerve only to light them to *Satan's drudgery*, and *now* the ſhadows of the evening are ſtretched out upon them, and their declining ſun is haſting apace to ſet in *everlaſting darkneſs*! could we viſit the *ſhades below*, and examine the *groans* of damned ſpirits, we ſhould find none more *deep* and *piercing*, more *common*, and yet more *ſevere*, than thoſe which proceed from the remembrance of *health* and *youth*, waſted in the paths of *ſin* and *folly*: that the time of greateſt activity and ſervice, ſhould only ſerve *on earth* to aggravate their guilt, *in hell* to increaſe their torment! yea, how often do we find the *ſaints themſelves*, who have been ſuffered to lie long in a natural ſtate, mourning bitterly, that they were no ſooner acquainted with Jeſus, and have loſt the prime of their days in the vain purſuits of empty ſhadows!—Go aſk the *glorified ſaints* in heaven; conſult each happy ſpirit above, and ſay, which of them all complains of a too early regard for Chriſt, too long continuance in his houſe? do

they

they not rather with one accord cry out, "Oh! that we had known him from the first moment of our being; and breathed forth his praises, as soon as we drew the breath of life! Oh! that we had commenced these songs of gratitude from the womb, that shall never cease to all eternity!"

So desirable is the *amiable Redeemer*! so delightful is RELIGION, when its truth and power enters the soul! so ravishing are the pleasures of *pardon of sin* and *peace with God*! such heavenly sweets and flowers of paradise grow all along the pleasant ways of *practical godliness*! consider, *dear Cousin*, 'tis by such as you, *religion* will gain the greatest honour, when the wondering world shall see you trample upon *youthful gaieties* and *despise* the vanities they so *adore*; and through the *crowd of temptations* and *present allurements* press after an unseen Jesus! this wins a glorious testimony to the ways of God, recommends religion to the minds of those who are prejudiced against it, and persuades the most profligate and abandoned sinner *almost* to be a Christian! These early *buddings* and *blossoms* of grace, these *tender plants* in God's garden, shed a sweeter fragrance and perfume, and often attract the eyes of beholders more, than the *tall* and *well-grown cedar*! every one that sees them is ready to be in love with their *spiritual beauty*, admire their *state*, and envy their *blessedness*! when YOUNG ONES are helped by divine grace, to express the power of religion, and to shine in the beauties

of

of goſpel holineſs, they ſpangle like incarnate angels! they convince the *conſciences* of thoſe about them, compel byſtanders to acknowledge the *reality* of inviſible things; the truth and excellency of *undiſſembled religion*; the admirable power of *ſupernatural grace*, in helping a *poor creature* to ſwim againſt the torrent of its corruptions, and to overcome the many perilous temptations which are ſo *peculiarly* adapted to its age! and ſhall not the thought of bringing *all this glory to God*, in conjunction with your *own felicity*, determine you for ever on Chriſt's ſide, and turn your back on all his rivals! Conſider, *child*, how amiable and admirable is *his perſon!* how infinite and matchleſs his *love!* how indiſpenſibly neceſſary his *grace!* be tranſported to think that you have youth to dedicate to a *Redeemer's ſervice!* how dearly hath he *paid* for every *ſtroke* we ſtrike, every *ſtep* we take to promote his intereſt! what *tears* and *ſtrugglings*, what *bitter agonies* and *painful death*, did he moſt cheerfully undergo to purchaſe ſuch wretches as we, and to put us into a capacity of being ſerviceable and happy! and ſhall our *mortal enemy*, who labours our deſtruction, be preferred to this *heavenly lover!*

Think it no *diſgrace* to be ſerious betimes, and to bear the yoke of Chriſt in your youth: the glorious angels that excel in ſtrength, and ſurpaſs in beauty, ſhining with immortal bloom, deem it their *honour* and their *happineſs* to be for ever ſerving this eternal King! as they

know

know no higher, and are *capable* of enjoying no greater good, so they reſt herein with *everlaſting contentment!* how ſtrangely inverted do things lie in the minds of *fallen creatures!* who had rather appear in the odious deformity and horror of ſin, than in the glorious reſemblance of him who is altogether lovely! Oh! *Couſin*, had we beheld the charms of an *obedient Adam*, when he came out of the hands of his Creator; could we now ſee the ſervices of *glorified ſpirits*, performed with all the marks of readineſs and joy, we ſhould never more cenſure the ways of godlineſs as *ſad* and *burdenſome!* But I hope better things of you, and things that accompany ſalvation; I hope that the preceding efficacy of victorious grace hath already prevailed over you, and rendered all my expoſtulations needleſs! I pray this my perſuaſion concerning you may be well grounded, and then, how pleaſing the proſpect that *my dear Couſin* will be my *happy companion* in all the glories of a bleſſed eternity! can you call God, Father! hide under the wing of his perfections, and rejoice in the aſſurance of his love? and are you indeed building the hope of your ſalvation upon Chriſt, the rock of ages? can you look on *heaven* as the manſion prepared for your everlaſting abode, and *death* as the angel which will call you home to that bliſsful ſtate? THEN, no longer envy the *fading pomp* of this *inglorious world*, nor once repine at the want of the overflowing of the

nether

nether ſpring, ſeeing you are poſſeſſed of the fountain of all bleſſedneſs!

I ſhall only ſay, *dear Couſin*, that what I have with ſo much *earneſtneſs* and *undiſguiſed ſincerity* been urging you to, is what *I myſelf* would above all things moſt induſtriouſly purſue; and nothing is half ſo grievous to me as the *impediments* which prevent me from running in God's commandments! I invite you, *child*, to nothing but what I have taſted, and tried, and find to be unſpeakably delightful! I urge you to a *journey*, in which I would not for the world but be your *fellow-traveller*; nor to venture in any *bottom* for eternity, in which I do not moſt gladly *embark*; Come then, *Couſin*, and *hand in hand* let us walk the bleſſed road to *Zion*, and haſte to our beloved *within the veil*! let our longing ſouls, inſpired with *joy*, and winged with *love*, keep pace with the *ſwift footed hart*, 'till we reach the gates of the *New Jeruſalem*! and as we go we will talk and tell of our *Redeemer's love*! how he left his Father's boſom, and threw off the robes of ſtate and majeſty, that he might be in a capacity to *ſuffer and die*, for a company of *contemptible creatures*, who had not one ſpark of affection towards him! O ſtupendous grace! that fills the angels with eternal wonder! Oh! that you and I, *dear Couſin*, and all our *relations* and *friends*, may be ſo happy as to bear a part in the *melody* of that glorious day, when the *redeemed of the Lord*, being all brought home to *their Father's houſe*, and ſeated around his heavenly

venly table, the glories of the *everlaſting goſpel* ſhall be unveiled; the vaſt dimenſions of *divine love* repreſented! and the various myſteries of *dark* but *wiſe Providence*, ſhall be unfolded and explained! Oh, the tranſports and harmony that will follow on *ſuch a revelation*! what a *profuſion of raptures* and *delights* will this pour into the minds, and ſhed abroad in the hearts of thoſe happy favourites! the frequent *forethoughts* of theſe celeſtial refreſhments at our *journey's end*, will *ſweeten* all the troubles, and *divert* the tedioufneſs of the way! let others admire the *preſent world*, and waſte their *young and healthful days* in the purſuits of vanity: let them be captivated with the *deadly charms* of ſin, and place their happineſs here below; as for you and I, *Couſin*, may we be taught better reſolutions, and account every thing in heaven and earth but loſs, without the knowledge of Chriſt crucified! may his righteouſneſs be the ground of our hope; his image our utmoſt deſire, and his glory our aim and ſtudy! we will triumph to think that we have youth to lay at the feet of the Redeemer; and whilſt others are left to rue the day of their birth, we will adore the grace, the glorious grace, that made us to differ! pity their unhappy ſtate, and rejoice in our own felicity! God grant it of his infinite mercy! Oh! that you may be found in the arms of Jeſus at the laſt day! ſo prays and hopes your affectionate kinſman

and ſoul lover

T. W.

LETTER

LETTER VI.

April 10, 1711.

——I need not ſay how welcome thoſe lines were, that brought me the tidings of your aſſured bliſs, in the *converſion* of your ſoul to Chriſt! news, ſo great and happy, and yet withal ſo well grounded and confirmed, as to leave no juſt room for the ſmalleſt ſuſpicion! This is what I have been, for *five years*, waiting, longing, and praying for, though ſo *full* and *ſatisfying* an aſſurance concerning it was beyond my hope and expectation! I rejoice in your happineſs; *bleſſed art thou of the Lord*! bleſſed in the city, and bleſſed in the field! bleſſed when thou comeſt in, and bleſſed when thou goeſt out! bleſſed both in ſoul and body! in health and ſickneſs! in life and death! in this world, and that which is to come; all the bleſſings of *the everlaſting covenant* are *yours*! all the *promiſes of grace* and *glory*, *yours*! God and Chriſt and heaven are *yours*! nothing can render you miſerable; nothing can make you any other than bleſſed! *there is no condemnation to them who are in Chriſt Jeſus*! your judge is become your advocate, your ſurety, your huſband, and in *love* and *juſtice* will pronounce your eternal abſolution! the *day of your death* will be better than the *day of your birth*! death to you has nothing affrighting about him! he has changed the viſage of a *meſſenger of wrath*,

for the ſmiling charms of a *courteous angel*! he is ſtripped of his *array of terror*, and cloathed with *garments of ſalvation*! he will open the door into the paradiſe of God! if we are continued here, it is to add to our *future crown of glory!* if we are removed, 'tis becauſe we are made meet for the inheritance of the ſaints, prepared to be tranſplanted into a *better ſoil!* Oh, the flouriſhing of thoſe *trees of righteouſneſs* that are planted hard by the Eternal Fountain, whoſe roots the living ſtreams do water, and the Sun of righteouſneſs quickeneth with his enlivening beams!

It is, *my dear Couſin*, with raviſhment of ſoul, that I find my former apprehenſion concerning your ſpiritual ſtate not *blaſted*, but blown into *full aſſurance*: and what I pray for in *others*, I can rejoice over in *you*; whilſt I am travelling in birth till Chriſt be formed in the ſouls of my other relations: I can behold in you, with thankful admiration, the lineaments of the divine image! I rejoice to think that you are not left with the *ſpecious outſide* of a formal profeſſion, the force of cuſtom, or the ſweetneſs of natural diſpoſition, but have been led beyond all theſe to BELIEVE IN THE LORD JESUS! that you are not only made to eſcape the *pollutions* of the world, and the *flagrant crimes* of a diſſolute age, but ſhould be raiſed above the moſt *refined attainments* of an unregenerate ſtate! ſo that your language is, *none but Chriſt*! none beſides him as the *object* of your *affection*; none but him, the *foundation* of your *hope*! and this

this object of your affection will never *diſappoint* you; this foundation of your hope will never make you aſhamed! the overflowing ſcourge of *death* and *judgment* ſhall ſweep away all *refuges of lies*, and *ſpiders webs*, when you ſhall remain *unſhaken*, being built upon the ROCK of ages!

Well may you now deſpiſe all the *fading glory* of this world, ſince in heaven you have a more *enduring ſubſtance*, even durable riches and righteouſneſs! other bleſſings are a *ring*, pardon is the *diamond*; the *caſket* of outward mercies ſinners may enjoy, but the *jewel* of ſalvation is conferred on his children alone! nothing ſhall befall you in this world, but ſhall be *matter of praiſe* in the world to come! mercies and afflictions, the comforts of a proſperous, and the trials of an adverſe ſtate, do all conſpire to advance *one happy deſign*, even your ſure ſalvation! What though you may at preſent be in heavineſs through manifold temptations, the *groans* of your militant ſtate, will but raiſe the *triumphs* of everlaſting conqueſt! many a *grateful hallelujah* will take its riſe from the remembrance of an hour of temptation, fiery conflicts, and ſtormy days in this wretched ſtate! every *vanquiſhed temptation* will be a jewel in your crown; every *victory* of your *faith* a flower in your garland, all reflecting an eternal honour on the Captain of your ſalvation! Oh! how cheerful ſhould you be, and of a merry heart, ſince your *perſon* is accepted, and your *ſins* are pardoned! how ought you to magnify the Lord, and your

ſpirit to rejoice in God your Saviour! Oh! *Couſin*, what ſmiles ſhould enliven *your countenance*, what raptures ſhould fire *your heart*, when you conſider, how great things God has done for you!

Seeing, *my dear Friend*, you are ſet out in the ſpiritual race, and in ſo fair a way for the heavenly Zion, *preſs forward* till you reach the prize! reſt not in any degrees of grace already received, but ſeek after higher attainments, and greater advances in the divine life! adore the grace that hath brought you from the *borders of Egypt*, and ſtretch all your powers to reach the *heavenly Canaan*! This is a noble ambition, and what well becomes an aſpiring candidate for heaven! It is the neglect of preſſing after *aſſurance* that cauſes ſuch barrenneſs to appear in the lives of many *modern profeſſors*: they either queſtion whether there is any ſuch thing, or ſlight it, and think they can do well enough without it; and cenſure, perhaps, and judge, as *conceited* and *vain glorious*, thoſe whom God hath favoured with it! and if it be thus, 'tis no wonder they *want the comforts* they deſpiſe, and that the ſpirit withholds his ſealing influences from hearts no more ſenſible of the *value* of them: but, believe me, 'tis *worth your while* to make your calling and election ſure! How will it ſoften every croſs, and ſweeten every affliction, to behold the glories of an approaching heaven ever preſent to your view! Do you long to be for ever in the embraces

braces of a Redeemer, and can you enjoy too much of him in your way home? you are profeſſedly travelling to the heavenly Canaan, and do you not deſire ſome of the *firſt fruits* of that pleaſant country? *my dear Couſin*, let not the ſcoffs and deriſion of a *poor ignorant world*, (whoſe malice you ſhould behold with compaſſion and pity); let not the unjuſt cenſures of the *formal profeſſor*, (whoſe coldneſs ſhould the more enflame you with aſſured zeal) hinder or diſcourage you in your hard purſuit of glory and immortality: but *go on* in that happy road in which grace hath ſet you; *go on* and live for ever! for though troubles now ſurround you, there remaineth a reſt for the people of God! cheer up, dear ſoul! there are but a few more ſteps between us and heaven! a few more tempeſtuous blaſts, and we ſhall be ſafe at home!

My prayer for you, Couſin, is, that you may have the everlaſting arms ſupporting you under your *preſent affliction*! may you be reſtored to *perfect health*, and live to glorify your Redeemer in the world, when my *fleſh* ſhall be crumbled into duſt; and when the bliſsful morning ſhall dawn upon your ſoul, on which you ſhall be ſent for to your Father's houſe, may the *joys of heaven* deſcend and meet you on the way! may the raviſhing ſmiles of your almighty friend, diſpel the horrors of the *gloomy vale*! may a full aſſurance of divine love crown your heart with immortal peace, and open to you a glorious paſſage into your maſter's joy! theſe are

are the sincere desires, fervent prayers, joyful hopes, and confident expectation of

yours, &c.

T. W.

LETTER VII.

My dear Sister, June 8, 1711.

I RECEIVED your short epistle with singular joy and delight, to find your relish for spiritual things maintained in its ancient vigour: Your repeated complaints of my not writing to you so often as you desire should be most gladly removed, had I that *time and retirement*, I formerly enjoyed: yet, blessed be God, my soul *still reaches* with humble eagerness after the glories of the invisible world, and those delightful splendours which adorn the state of our exalted Saviour! were it with me *as I wish*, I would be for ever digging into those heavenly mysteries which concern the *welfare* and contain the *happiness* of our immortal spirits! no name, no theme, should employ my thoughts but that of JESUS! believe me, Sister, (and to the divine glory and your encouragement be it spoken) *Christ upon the cross*, as well as upon the *throne*; Jesus, in all the offices he sustains, in all the wonders he has wrought to accomplish our redemption, is still the *unrivalled object of my heart*! yea, doubtless, I count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ my Lord, who appears to me

every

every day with freſh beauties! not only as *neceſſary* but *infinitely excellent*! I ſee no cauſe to alter my *former choice*, but much rather to riſe in my love and admiration of him! I wonder how the *Chriſtian world* can make ſo ſmall account *of Him* in the matters of their ſalvation; of *Him*! who is the beloved of the Father! the foundation of the goſpel! without whom the whole ſcheme of our redemption would *vaniſh*, and all our building for heaven and happineſs *fall into eternal ruin*! how often would I be launching into the *ocean* of his love, and digging new treaſures out of the glorious *mine* of the everlaſting goſpel! a *magazine* never to be exhauſted! But how little ſoever its myſteries may now raviſh a *mortal's eye*, and attract our *dark and cloudy minds*, inquiring *angels* will rejoice to ſtudy them to all eternity! thoſe towering ſpirits of ſo vaſtly ſuperior intellectual capacities, cry, *Hail! to theſe depths of wiſdom! all hail! to theſe heights of love!* and with eagereſt ſearch are ſtill looking into the arcana of ſalvation! but alas! alas! this imperfect ſtate is ſo embarraſſed and perplexed on all hands, that it is hard to hold *a ſtrict uninterrupted correſpondence within the veil*! I, that would *dive* into the depths of divine ſubjects, can but ſkim over the ſurface! I, that would *ſoar aloft*, can hardly *ſhake the wing*! Oh! Siſter! Siſter! poverty of ſpeech will not permit me to tell you how I long for the concluſion of theſe *unprofitable days*, that I may flee away to a ſtate of perfect and everlaſting ſervice and enjoyment!

enjoyment! It is my *conſtant grief* and *daily exerciſe*, that I am ſtill ſo full of imperfections! *vaſt* and *various* are the ſpiritual difficulties which beſet me every day? every ſtep I take towards mount Zion above, is a *freſh conviction* that I am yet but in a militant ſtate, and have need of the *whole armour of God*! but 'tis a reviving thought that a happy and glorious period ſhall preſently be put to all our conflicts! we ſhall reſt from our labours! and, I am well perſuaded, when we come to caſt anchor on the ſhore of eternity, and ſet foot within the pale of immortal glory, our *ſongs of triumph* ſhall be proportioned to *our trials* in this vale of tears! O! what crowns of glory! garments of praiſe! and palms of honour, await us in the New Jeruſalem! when we ſhall ſhut our eyes upon this world of woe, and open them in the immediate preſence of our God! how ſuddenly ſhall we be ſurprized with *compleate felicity* and *eternal reſt*! an *everlaſting farewell* ſhall then be taken of our toils and travels in this howling wilderneſs! and every face we ſhall behold ſmiling with *an air of glory*, and expreſſing all the happy tokens of ſouls *replete*, yea, *overflown* with bleſſedneſs! Oh! inviting ſtate! well worthy our patient and cheerful waiting a far more *tedious train of years*, than is aſſigned to us in this weary pilgrimage!

You could not but imagine, *dear Siſter*, that the tidings you ſent me at the bottom of your letter, would be exceedingly welcome! *how welcome*, I am utterly at a loſs to tell you! good

news

news indeed from a far country! and will God indeed own ſo deſpicable a creature, ſo weak and worthleſs an inſtrument, to ſuch glorious purpoſes as you mention? O! the ſovereignty of grace! that out of the mouths of babes and ſucklings thus ordaineth praiſe! *herein* will I rejoice, that the more *inconſiderable* I am, the more the *excellency of the power* appears to be of Chriſt! and it is my heart's deſire and higheſt joy, that the crown ſhould ſhine for ever on *His head*! my ſoul would be conſcious to no other ambition, and graſp no greater honour, than to be the humble inſtrument of his glory!

Rejoice to think, that the time is coming when the *diſpenſations of Providence* ſhall be diveſted of all their veils! when you ſhall underſtand how *kind* the *errands* were of God's *roughеſt meſſengers*; how *ſoft* the ſtrokes of his heavenly rod; how well conſiſtent with *pardoning grace* and *mercy*, were the *ſevereſt* of his dealings towards you; you ſhall then find that in the whole tenor of your Redeemer's conduct there was nothing repugnant to the relations he ſuſtains; that the ſmiles of a *Father* might be ſeen through the frowns of the *ſharpeſt rebuke*: and how eaſily accounted for in the divine procedure, are *ſpecial favours* and *ſpiritual trials*; a *gracious heart*, and a *correcting hand*! you ſhall then confeſs the harmony and beautiful combination of *grace* and *Providence*; how the *one* did operate and exactly move in conformity to the deſigns of the *other*! Caſt not away, then, your confidence, which hath

great

great recompence of reward! how ſmall a ſpace lies between *you* and *eternal glory!* there is but a ſtep between *many* and everlaſting burnings! the thought of your happineſs ſhould invigorate your reſolution in your progreſs to the heavenly Canaan! can you faint with the *crown* in your eye? can you *tire* in that road in which your *dear Redeemer* is gone before, and which ſo *ſafely* and *directly* leads to his face and preſence! O! may nothing bound your aſpiring wiſhes, but the viſion and fruition of God in Chriſt? reach forward to what is ſtill before! and be truly thankful for the ſmalleſt tokens of *ſpecial love*! do not immoderately lament the *preſent want* of *paſt* enjoyments! there is often a great deal of *carnality* and *ſpiritual weakneſs* in looking into the ciſtern of *received grace*, and forgetting the *fountain* from whence it flows. When we are favoured with a taſte of the heavenly manna, and a free ſupply of the water of life, we are too apt to neglect the *hand* that gives the *one*, and the *rock* which yields the *other*! our comforts are but *rays*, *they* may depart, the *ſun* ſtill remains! they are but *drops*, the *ocean* ſtill is ours! they are but pledges of that love which was from everlaſting, and will be to everlaſting! and ſhall I idolize the gift and neglect the donor? Is ſome brighter ſpot in this wilderneſs *indeed* preferable to my glorious home, that I am ſo often looking back to paſt enjoyments! this inquiry puts my ſoul *to the bluſh*, and ſhames me for my overvaluation of that which could only

only be a *means* and not my great and haſtening *end*! wherefore I reſolvedly refrain, and ſtudiouſly endeavour *to forget* (in that ſenſe) *the things that are behind*; well knowing at how great a diſtance I am yet groveling from the attainment of that, for which I was *apprehended of Chriſt*; and that theſe *cordials* by the way were never deſigned to *ſlacken* our pace, but to *quicken* and *encourage us* in our journey home! Ah! Siſter! be not contented with the *glimmerings* of the *glow worm*, when you may *ſhine with the glory of an angel*! you have to do with a God that giveth *more grace*! be not ſatisfied (as many are in our day) to be toſſed all their lives on the ſorrowful waves of *fears* and *doubtings*, and at laſt be rather *driven* than *drawn* towards the haven of death, when you may go rejoicing in the hope of glory, and *put into port* with a full gale! let the frequent views of your inheritance above deſpoil the world of all its *falſe glory*, and fill you with an *holy diſdain* of every thing that would vie with the bleſſed Saviour! live much in a believing expectation of that felicity which lies beyond the grave, and labour after an aſſurance of your intereſt therein! be dying to this world every day, and entertain higher thoughts, and more raiſed admiration of Chriſt and his love! the *nearer* the Sun of righteouſneſs approaches with his glorious beams, the *faſter* do the ſhades, the darkſome ſhades of *preſent things* vaniſh away: it is in *his light* that we can make the trueſt eſtimate of *eternal things*, and ſee through

the

the fallacious appearances of *ſenſible objects*. Come, deareſt Siſter, and let us triumph in our redemption from the vanity of the creature, and that vexation of ſpirit which *embitters* the *ſweets* of the greateſt worldlings! they that wield the *ſceptres* and wear the *crowns* of this inferior world, that ſhine in *ſcarlet* and fare *delicately*, would gladly (did they judge aright) exchange all their *honours* and their *robes*, for the happier ſtate of the *meaneſt Chriſtian*.

I truſt, if divine Providence permit us once more to ſee each other, it will be to our *mutual comfort* and *eſtabliſhment*: and in the mean time may we acquieſce with the fulleſt ſatisfaction in the conduct and diſpoſal of our Lord, who will determine every thing *for the beſt*! and ſhould we *never more* ſee each other in this imperfect ſtate, with what joy could I *leave you behind*, or hear that you were *gone before me*; as being confident of this, that we ſhall paſs an happy eternity in mutual affection, and be both for ever before the throne of the Lamb, ſerving and praiſing him day and night. Now unto him who is able to keep us from falling, and to preſent us faultleſs before the preſence of his glory, with exceeding joy, even to him be glory for evermore! unto his care and protection I commend your ſoul and mine,

and remain, &c.

T. W.

LETTER

LETTER VIII.

Oct. 22, 1711.

——HOW I joy to ſee *young ones*, eſpecially of my relations, inquiring the way to Zion, and thirſting for the fountain of living waters! how pleaſant to behold the *croſs of Chriſt* bearing ſuch *early fruit*, and a *young immortal* in the morning of its days, riſing out of the *ruins of its apoſtacy*, to do homage to its glorious Redeemer! how raviſhing is it to behold the victories obtained under the *Chriſtian banner*, and the ſpoils won from the Prince of darkneſs!

You ſay, that *you requeſt my prayers*; my ardent deſires after the welfare of your ſoul, are far from being confined to the limits of a *morning and evening prayer*; but thoughts of *ſpiritual compaſſion* paſs often through my affected mind, in the midſt of the noiſe and hurries of the world! many an *earneſt ejaculation* has forced its way through the crowd of a thouſand perplexities, bearing you in its hand to the *mercy ſeat*: and let me tell you, dear ——, the *enlargement* and *freedom* I ſometimes find in ſpreading your caſe before the Lord, makes me delight to be often thus engaged: and as it encourages to frequent returns to the throne, ſo it ſeems a *happy preſage* and *intimation* of obtaining the ſo much deſired bleſſing! 'tis here I can unboſom my largeſt wiſhes, and with the utmoſt liberty and refreſhing hope, recom-

 mend

mend the care of your immortal ſoul to a faithful Redeemer! he is a *ſkilful phyſician* that can heal all the maladies of corrupted nature: a *merciful high prieſt* who has ſprinkled the throne with his blood: he is a *light* to guide the wandering ſteps of the poor bewildered ſoul into the way of life! he has a *voice* that can raiſe from the deepeſt and darkeſt grave of ſin, and ſhake off the ſtrongeſt chains of ſpiritual death! may he ſtretch forth his almighty arm, and draw you with the *cords of love* and the *bands of a man*! Let every valley be exalted, and every mountain become a plain, when Chriſt goes forth in this important work! let us be found praying and wreſtling for each other, and may Jeſus *be pleading for us both*, till our prayers are turned into praiſes to eternity!

Yours, &c.

T. W.

LETTER IX.

Dear —— Oct. 24, 1711.

IT was a pleaſant hour in which I received and read your two epiſtles: for even the *remoteſt* proſpect of your ſalvation, is far more agreeable and entertaining than all the *paſtimes* and *diverſions* in the world; I was well apprized, *Couſin*, when I firſt conceived any thoughts of writing to you, of the real kindneſs

neſs as well as the importance of the advice. Bleſſed be God that your underſtanding is ſo far enlightened, as to apprehend the value of your *immortal ſoul*, and to receive with thankfulneſs whatever may conduce to your *ſpiritual welfare*! this you term "*the greateſt kindneſs*," and prefer it to all other kind of ſervice and affection whatever; herein you judge righteous judgment, for nothing compared with this deſerves the title of true friendſhip!

Being favoured (through grace) with a comfortable aſſurance of my own ſpiritual condition, and a joyful proſpect of my future happineſs, nothing is now ſo dear to me and ſo deſired by me, (next to my Redeemer's glory) as the welfare of precious ſouls, eſpecially thoſe of my relations! that grace, that diſtinguiſhing grace! that has ſo ſingularly appeared to me the chief of ſinners, I long to have communicated to all around me! there is room enough, there is bread enough in our Father's houſe! the multiplicity of coheirs cannot leſſen or divide the inheritance above, but every one ſhall enjoy a *whole heaven* to eternity!

The following letters were written by Mr. Ward's friends to himself.

LETTER X.

From the Rev. Mr. Payne, to Mr. Ward.*

Dear Sir, Sept. 8, 1707.

IT is early in the morning, and I have not had much ſleep in the night, yet I could willingly write a few lines to teſtify my love to you: I heartily thank you for your letter, and that account you have given me of the Lord's grace to you, in which I greatly rejoice. The Lord cauſe his face always to ſhine upon you, and give you the continual enjoyment of his kindneſs and grace. That grace of God which hath ſo clearly appeared to you, will, I doubt not effectually engage you to live to his glory! the very God of peace ſanctify you wholly, and I pray God your whole ſpirit, and ſoul and body, be preſerved blameleſs unto the coming of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt! I would adviſe you (if you have not already) for the glory of God and your own comfort, to join yourſelf ſpeedily in communion with ſome church of Chriſt, where the goſpel is purely preached, and its order maintained. Though I value not names and denominations, yet I eſteem thoſe churches that are called *congregational* to be neareſt in their order to the mind of

* Vid. page 17.

of Chriſt in his word, As to Mr. R. touching what you write truly and faithfully (for which I thank you) I did take occaſion to diſcourſe with him: I ſhould have been glad to have found ſo clear a manifeſtation of the grace of God in its work on his ſoul, as on yours: however, if he dealt truly with me, I hope there is ſome good thing in him towards the Lord God of Iſrael. I deſire you, as you have opportunity, to be helpful to him: I had thoughts of ſeeing you before the winter, but now I doubt I ſhall not. Mine and my dear wife's reſpects to you. The Lord be with you.

I am yours affectionately,

WM. PAYNE.

LETTER XI.

Dear Sir, May 1, 1708.

I RETURN you many thanks for your favour in lending me *the account of your converſion*: I was before ſo much caſt down, that I was ready to cry out, *there is no hope left*; but when I read of the wonderful things the Lord had done for you, I burſt forth into praiſe and admiration, and I ſaw that even *my* ſins were not more numerous than God's mercies! nor *my* ſoul too polluted for the blood of Chriſt to cleanſe!

A. B.

LETTER

LETTER XII.

My deareſt Friend,

I HAVE cauſe to rejoice on your behalf, in the diſtinguiſhing honour which God hath conferred on you: you have been made to ride upon the high places; and in the hole of the rock, have ſeen Jehovah's glory paſs before you. Ah! my dear Brother, 'tis delightful to enjoy the ſmiles of our Redeemer's countenance, and after many dark and melancholy hours, with pleaſure, ſay, *This is our beloved, and this is our friend!* What great encouragement have we to be daily looking unto Jeſus, who hath done all for us, and is inveſted by the Father, with all power to accompliſh the deſigns of his grace in our final ſalvation!

J. F.

LETTER XIII.

Sir, Feb. 28, 1708-9.

MY daughter *Elizabeth* lived ſome time with you in *Mr. Papillon's* family, which I deſire for ever to praiſe God for. The good inſtructions you gave her, laid a foundation, under the divine bleſſing, for the ſalvation

ſalvation of her ſoul! I cannot forbear thus paying my reſpects to you.

I am, yours to ſerve

R. S.

LETTER XIV.

Dear Bro. in the Lord. Nov. 7, 1709.

I AM come very ſafe to the end of my journey, and have experienced the preſence of the Lord with me on my way! the enjoyment of whoſe favour, is better far than all the pleaſures of the world: one ray from the mercy ſeat can turn a dungeon into a palace; darkneſs into light, and the water of adverſity into the ſtrong wine of conſolation. Oh! my Brother! RELIGION is a glorious myſtery! it is a common vulgar word that hath run up and down the world, often *mentioned*, but little *known*! but if we come to inquire into the ſum and ſubſtance of it, methinks we ſhall find it to be, *God in human nature*! great is the myſtery of godlineſs, God manifeſt in the fleſh.

J. F.

LETTER

LETTER XV.

My dear Friend, Nov. 29, 1709.

I RECEIVED your letter, which did ſo much affect me that I could hardly read it through. The Lord grant that I may keep pace with you in your heavenly journey, to the bright manſions where the multiplicity of co-heirs ſhall not leſſen the inheritance! you put me in mind of the dying ſong of holy *Muſculus*:

"Nil ſupereſt Vitæ, frigus præcordia captat,
Sed Tu Chriſte mihi, Vita perennis, ades.
Quid trepidas Anima, ad ſedes abitura Quietis,
En tibi Ductor adeſt, Angelus ille tuus, &c."

I have with yours, received a letter from my mother, giving me an account of the death of an eminent young man, my very particular friend; he went triumphing to heaven, impreſſed with the moſt magnifying apprehenſions of FREE GRACE, from the foundation to the top ſtone.

J. F.

FINIS